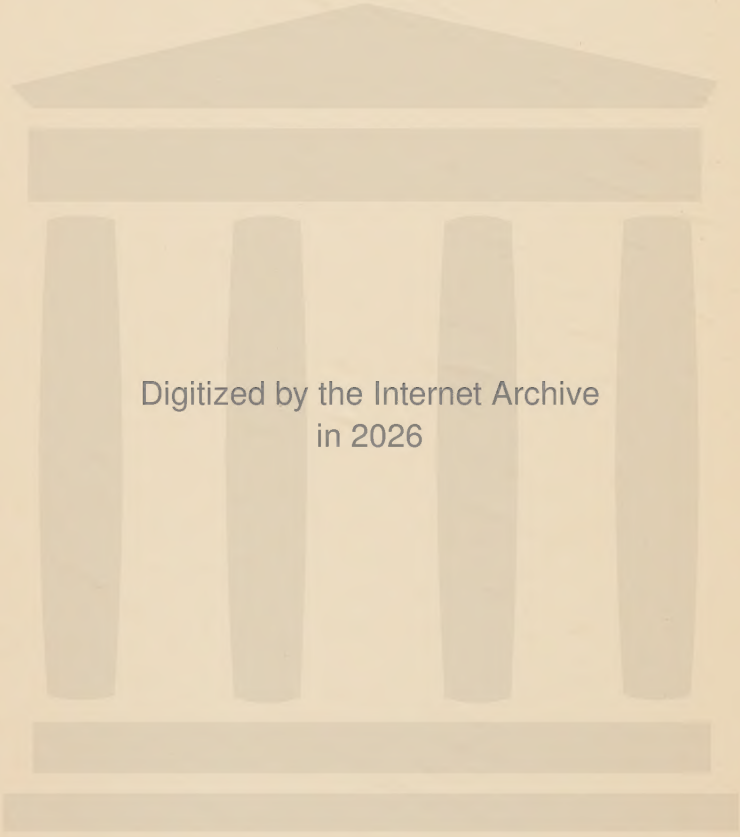
THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MEXICO

By
ERNEST GALARZA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THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

AS A FACTOR IN THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY OF MEXICO

By
ERNEST GALARZA

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To
The Memory of
My Mother

FOREWORD

This brief study of the Catholic Church as a factor in Mexican political and social history represents eight months of personal observation during a period when the so-called "religious conflict" was at a critical strain. The outside world has read the laws, the manifestos, the decrees, the pastoral letters, and other documents that make up the formal or official development of the crisis; but the writer has enjoyed the advantages incidental to actual presence on the field, where conversations, rumors, confidential chats and the heat of the controversy offer accurate and profitable material towards an understanding of the subject under discussion.

The international relations between the United States and Mexico react to the tension of the religious crisis in the southern republic. Strictly speaking, the question is a domestic one for Mexico, and should imply no diplomatic misunderstandings with the north. Notwithstanding this, groups of interested people on both sides of the border have agitated the question in such a way as to place it within the sphere of international accord and understanding. The Knights of Columbus have challenged Calles with a one million dollar "educational" campaign against his policy, affirming, with more puerile impetuosity than mature reflection, that "they will stand by until you and your so-called Constitution are dead". Some Protestant groups, on the other hand, have unreservedly thrown their moral support to President Calles, as witnessed by the resolution of the California Presbyterian Synod held in July, 1926, at Hollywood, California. This representative body entertained, discussed and approved a resolution commending very categorically and unanimously Calles's policy towards the Catholic Church in Mexico. No one can say whether this congress of prelates and laymen would have given their official ap-

proval to such an inclusive resolution had they known that at that very time the police of Mexico City were imposing physical maltreatment on Catholics, including women and children, whose age could ill resist cold showers from fire-hoses and blows from police nightsticks. Between these two extreme but typical examples move a large number of interested agitators, speculators, investors, manifest destinists, 100 per cent Americans, and smaller fry who in one way or another, hope to gain something out of a possible rupture between the two nations. To such, the religious issue in Mexico is legitimate stuff out of which to create new obstacles, and against such sane public opinion must be alert, using its most effective weapon for international understanding—a knowledge of the facts.

Volumes have been written, in times past, on every angle of the history of the Church in Mexico. The works that date previous to 1810 are almost entirely of narrative and dogmatical character. Beginning with 1810 writings of controversial and critical nature begin to appear at first timidly and unperceived, gradually swelling through the years of independence, dictatorships, and revolutions to our own days, when the mass of attack and counterattack, parry and defense, phillipic and diatribe, overwhelms the reader.

A word, then, as to sources of information.

For reference to the historical development as a hierarchical and evangelistic organization, the work of Father Mariano Cuevas, S. J., was used with great frequency. This monumental history, in four volumes, is the fruit of the labors of one who is thoroughly familiar with the original documents and other papers of early Mexican history. A masterly style, a virile language and a tendency towards liberality and impartiality in unguarded moments, together with the undeniable authenticity of the source materials make his "Historia de la Iglesia en México" an indispensable part of any study on the subject.

The collection of Genaro García's "Documentos Inéditos o muy raros para la Historia de México" has

yielded interesting and illuminating material. Here and there appears a royal edict, a decree, a letter of the Princess to the prelates of Nueva España, which expose facts seldom encountered by the casual student. "Los Intereses Católicos en América," by José I. V. Eyzaguirre, a Catholic prelate, provides a bird's-eye glimpse of the battle that the Church was waging throughout Latin America in the middle of the 19th century. "La Gran Década Nacional," by M. Galindo y Galindo, in three volumes, yields very important data on the War of the Reform, the Intervention, and Second Empire. Of the rest of the works cited, the principal ones are: "Memorias de José M. y Bocanegra"; "Las Revoluciones de México, 1808 a 1830", by Lorenzo de Zavala; "México a través de los Siglos"; and "La cuestión religiosa en México", by J. Pérez Lugo, containing a collection of documents bearing on the subject from earliest times, a collection perhaps unrivaled by any contemporary publication.

Frequent use has been made of the daily, weekly and monthly publications of Mexico. Grateful acknowledgement is made for the co-operation, advice and courtesy of Prof. Santiago G. Flores; Sr. José Ibarra of the Department of Foreign Relations; Dr. H. A. Monday, through whose kindness I was permitted to consult the originals of some old and rare manuscripts and publications, such as the "Concilios Provinciales"; and Sr. Aurelio Manrique, ex-governor of San Luis Potosí.

The bibliography includes a complete list of all the works used in the preparation of this book.

Before entering into a consideration of the subject, it would be useful to indicate the general norm which has guided this study. The clash of opinions has revealed the important and the insignificant, the fundamental and the trivial; out of the controversy arise five considerations which constitute the chief issues involved. They are:

1. Has the Catholic Church meddled in the political development of Mexico?

2. What has been and what is now the strength and the weakness of the Catholic Church?
3. Is the reform necessary or advisable?
4. Are the measures employed by the civil authorities to effect the reform justified?
5. Finally, does the policy of reform spell ruin for the Mexican state?

An attempt will be made to arrive at some conclusions on these five issues at the conclusion of the study; the reader will be better enabled to judge whether those conclusions are justified when squared with the facts of history.

—E. G.

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CHAPTER I

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Although the conquest of New Spain was actually undertaken by the intrepid soldier and adventurer, Hernando Cortés, others had preceded him in the work of exploration of the coasts that lay south and west of la Española, now Cuba. In 1517 one Francisco Hernández de Córdoba, by order of Diego Velázquez, governor of the island, organized an expedition of three ships. He touched the cape of Catoche and Campeche, sustaining engagements with the natives, taking a few prisoners, and obtaining some samples of the mineral wealth of the country. After days of desultory cruising along the coasts of the isthmus, the ships returned to Cuba, where the ambition and cupidity of Velázquez were aroused by the tales of golden idols and the stories told by the native prisoners whom Córdoba had brought back.

A second expedition was projected, the command of which was given to a nephew of the governor, Juan de Grijalva y Cuellar, an enterprising and able youth. The first of May, 1518, the fleet, composed of 240 men, set sail, following the course traced by Hernández de Córdoba. A landing was made on the island of Cozumel, five days later, where, on the highest part of the native teocalli, Grijalva set the royal Christian flag, and Juan Díaz said mass for the first time on what now constitutes the territory of Mexico. Grijalva contented himself with a cursory exploration of the coast, landing now and

then, retreating immediately at the least hostility from the natives. He sailed as far north as San Juan de Ulúa and thence to Cuba.

Velázquez was far from pleased with the meager results obtained by his nephew. His ambition became not one of exploration or discovery, but of conquest and consequent enrichment for himself. He sent samples of the gold which had been brought back, to the royal court, asking for the authority to proceed with his ambitious idea. Before he received an answer he had laid his plans; he appointed his secretary, Hernando Cortés, captain and leader of the expedition. The ambition of the young Cortés (he was 33 at this time) was no less than that of his chief. Unfortunate in his amorous past, he had settled temporarily in Cuba, waiting for the opportunity to carve his fortune from the fabulous wealth of the new world conquests. On receiving the appointment as chief of the expedition, he threw himself into the work of preparation with his customary energy, paying out of his own wealth for much of the equipment of the fleet.

Everything was in readiness, but Cortés's plans were on the point of failing. Slander and gossip had reached the ears of Velázquez, who began to doubt the faithfulness of his secretary. He contemplated appointing someone else in Cortés's place, so anxious was he to reap the fame and reward for himself. But the Conqueror, advised of the state of affairs, speeded up the loading of the ships with secrecy, and, on the 18th of November, 1518, amid the recriminations of the irate governor, lifted anchor and headed for the promised land.

With the details of the conquest of the new land, this work is not concerned. The heroic deeds of the handful of Spaniards, the resolution and generalship of Cortés himself, the tact or the brutality exercised by him as the case required, the pitched battles against numberless odds, are all the content of one of the greatest epics in history. We may properly enquire, however, somewhat into the motives that impelled the soldier to undertake such a hazardous task.

Historians have not been lacking who would reduce

all the motives for the conquest to one inclusive premise: the lust for gold. That this was one of the impelling motives is undeniable in the case of the conquest of Mexico. Diego Velázquez showed his impatience with the first explorers who contented themselves with mere samples of the golden treasure beyond the seas, and who permitted the bows and arrows of the aborigines to stand in the way of the best soldiers of the Old World. The letters written by the town council of Veracruz to their Majesties are filled with bitter recriminations against Velázquez for the outrageous prices he demanded for food and clothing from the soldiers; and it reveals the dissatisfaction of Cortés with the superficial explorations of Grijalva and Córdoba, when, with a little intrepidity, they could have reached the sources of the treasure the samples of which they had brought back.[1] Step by step we see the Conqueror demanding gold, gems, silver and priceless ornaments from the fallen chieftans; the cupidity that was aroused instead of being satiated by the presents of the emperor of the Aztecs, Moctezuma; and finally, as a perpetual stain on the name of Spanish arms, the torture by fire of Cuauhtemoc as a means of compelling him to reveal the hiding place of the imperial treasure. Beyond a doubt, the desire for gold impelled these adventurers to great deeds and explained many of their most refined cruelties.

There was something more, however—the desire to spread the holy Christian religion, of which Spain had become the champion. There is evidence to prove that not in the least unimportant was this missionary spirit of evangelization, as witness the instructions given to Cortés by Velázquez before the third expedition left Cuba. The instructions set forth, in part, that "the principal motive that you should have and that must always be . . . is that in this voyage God our Father be well served and glorified, and our holy Catholic faith be extended; and know that the principal reason which their Majesties have for permitting the discovery of new lands, is, that such a vast number of souls . . . who have been

[1]Cartas de Relación de Hernán Cortés. Vol. 1 p. 12.

and are lost outside our holy Catholic faith should be informed by you, that they may know how there is only one God, Creator of heaven and earth . . .''[1]

When Cortés had induced the natives of Cozumel to parley with him, he assured them ''they were not come to do them harm or injury, but to admonish them and to bring them to a knowledge of our holy Catholic faith, and that they might be subjects of their Majesties''.[2] After founding la Villa Rica de la Veracruz, the Conqueror swore in this fashion: ''. . . and I protest in the name of His Majesty that from now on my principal intention and motive in making this war . . . shall be to bring and to reduce the natives to a knowledge of our holy faith . . . Hernando Cortés''.[3]

These affirmations, oaths and confessions of purpose are beyond a doubt sincere. The prolonged struggle in the Peninsula against the Moors for eight centuries had bred a zeal for the faith that was matched by none other in Europe. To be a Catholic was synonymous with being a soldier of the King of León, Aragón or Castile. The nationalism that had slowly developed was inseparably united and identified with the Catholic religion, and it was the very nature of the Spanish soldier to proclaim in one breath the majesty of his king and the glory of his religion. Cuevas says, ''Whatever may have been the life and the mistakes of Cortés and his companions, they were filled with the Spanish faith of their times.''[4] What the origin of this ''Spanish faith'' was we have just seen.

Nor did the soldier fail to comply with his pledge. Cortés imposed a fine of 15 ''castellanos'' on all unbelievers, ''one third to go to the brotherhood of Our Lady, and for her work in these parts.'' The first thing that he ordered on landing at Cozumel was the demolition of the ''teocalli'' or temple where he ''told them of many holy things, and caused them to raise a figure of Our Lady, and a cross, assuring them that by these signs they would always be assisted, having good crops, and for the salvation of their souls.''

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[1]Historia de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 p. 107.
[2]Cartas de Relación. Vol. 1 p. 10.
[3]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 p. 111.
[4]Ibid., p. 115.

But more; the zeal of the soldier and of the missionary was an answer to the strictly canonical mandate of discipline and of the desire to repair the injuries which the Church was suffering in the East at the hands of the Turk. Fray Julian Garcés clearly expressed this when he said: "Let us wrest more domain from the devil in the Indies than he steals from us with his Turks in Europe."

Gold, then, and Souls, were the objective of the vanguard of conquerors. Gold for the chests of their Majesties, and for their private pockets; Souls for the flock of His Holiness and the Mother Church. Strange bedfellows, these, who in realizing their respective hopes, willed to the conquered land such a tragic inheritance of social ills.

To achieve this dual aim, two figures necessarily stand in relief in all the period that we are dealing with—the Soldier and the Priest. Which should occupy the preference is difficult to determine and perhaps they should appear as inseparable twins, as two expressions of one phenomenon. One Catholic writer tells us: "The kings of Spain, who proposed to convert into worshippers of the true God the infinite numbers of savages who inhabited the new continent, with exemplary zeal, discerned in the religious orders the most powerful element to realize such a gigantic task".[1] The contradiction involved in this statement reveals the indissoluble connection between the Priest and the Soldier. Logically, to convert the heathen, there is only one means—the missionary; to conquer new lands—the soldier; but to facilitate the task of the soldier, nothing more convenient than the priest; and to break the way for the cross, the edge of the sword.

The Aztec empire was awakened out of its isolated splendor by the Gregorian chants of zealous priests, ably accompanied by the clash of mailed armour and roaring, black-mouthed monsters. Our often-cited authority, Cuevas, says: "the Evangel appeared in those times associated with such bloody episodes as the slaughter of Cholula, carrying with it the destruction of races and

[1]Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 1 p. 534.

their traditions.'"[1] And he adds, further on, "the missionaries did not need the excesses nor the abuses of the conquest, but they did need the protection of the conqueror."[2] And further, "Under no circumstances is it convenient for the priests to go alone, but they should be accompanied by honest and Christian folk, not to do harm, but to give them assistance."[3] It is singular how even the most scholarly forget that the greatest triumphs of evangelistic zeal within the Roman Church were achieved by hands such as those of San Francisco Javier and Fray Felipe de Jesús Margil, who disdained to lift with one hand the Cross and with the other the Sword.

No truer and yet no more dramatic synthesis of the methods of this spiritual-military conquest can be cited than one from the pen of a Catholic prelate, Rev. Dr. José Ignacio Eyzaguirre, writing in 1863. He says, speaking of the conquest of Peru and Chile: "The cannon balls had hardly disconcerted the front ranks of the Toqui tribesmen, on the shores of the Mataquito River, when the regular clergy, establishing institutions for public instruction, laid the foundation for the great monuments to science and art that were to be."[4] In other words, the thunder and crash of the artillery had hardly diminished to an echo when the voice of the missionary could be heard in psalms of the love and fraternity of the gospels.

This, then, is the tableau in which the Conquest is revealed. Praise and condemnation have been heaped on the whole procedure, some preferring it to the war of attrition which the Anglo-Saxon carried on in the north against the Indian without the pretext of evangelization. The fact remains that the Church in this manner dug deeply and well a base for its foundations, though in the process thousands of human lives found a grave, and though blood and human flesh were copious ingredients of the mortar.

The success of the early Church in Mexico could not have been achieved so rapidly and so securely otherwise.

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[1]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 p. 189.
[2]Ibid., p. 155.
[3]Ibid.
[4]Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 1 p. 480.

A bare 28 years intervened between the landing of the first group of missionaries at Veracruz, and the middle of the 16th century; and yet, what a marvel of achievement in so brief a space! The impartial reader cannot but be profoundly impressed with the tireless activity of these militant religionists, going about destroying huge temples, idols, deep-rooted customs, traditional tribal organization, mastering innumerable dialects and waging ceaseless war against idolatry and heathenism. So one can comprehend the spirit of pride manifested by a historian of the Church, who says: "If the conquest of Mexico, in the temporal realm, has been called an unbelievable heroic epic, the spiritual conquest, the foundation of the Catholic Church, is with more reason the realization of the holy epic of peace and love . . . in one quarter of a century thousands of temples were reduced to dust (the number is fixed at approximately 80,000), eight million natives professed the faith, accepting the only laws of society as condensed in the Catholic doctrine."

That this tremendous work was in places superficial, there is no serious doubt. It would have been physically impossible for two score missionaries to explain the metaphysics of the faith to millions before conducting them to the baptismal font. The correction of this fault was left for the First Provincial Council to remedy in 1555; but meanwhile due observance must be made of the tireless energy and the indomitable will of the earliest messengers of the Catholic faith.

We have noted thus far the intimate relation which the spiritual and the military conquests bore to each other. Later we shall have occasion to observe the continuation of this league when the period of reconstruction set in; how the Spanish military and civil power continued to regard the Church as an indispensable ally to insure its domination over the natives, and how the Church continued to consider itself as the chief pillar of the new social structure, without which Spanish rule would be precarious if not impossible. Meanwhile, however, we may pause to study in detail the orders through whom

the Church labored, whose success laid the groundwork of the future structure.

The history of Catholic preaching in Mexico begins as far back as 1511. In that year, an exploring party was wrecked off the coast of Yucatán, from which only twelve were saved. All but two were sacrificed by the natives, these two being permitted to continue inland. One of these was Fr. Jerónimo de Aguilar, who was the first to preach the gospel in New Spain and who introduced the first Catholic prayer book into the land, one he had salvaged from the wreck. Jerónimo de Aguilar wandered about among the tribes of the isthmus for eight years, acquainting himself with the dialects and living among the natives. In 1519, when Cortés had anchored at Cozumel, he heard of this castaway priest and immediately dispatched a boat-load of soldiers to find him and bring him back. Their mission was unsuccessful; but when the fleet was about to set sail for the north a canoe appeared on the horizon, whereupon an investigation was made and it was found that its chief passenger was none other than Aguilar. He joined the expedition as Cortés's chief interpreter, utilizing the linguistic knowledge acquired during his wanderings in Yucatán.

With the expedition headed by Fernández de Córdoba had gone a clergyman by the name of Alfonso Gonzales; and Juan de Grijalva had taken along one Juan Díaz, who, as we have said, was the first to say mass in New Spain. Both of these returned to Cuba, disheartened by the hardships and the dangers of the undertaking.

In 1524 came the first great step in the work of evangelization. In May of that year there landed at Veracruz the famous "The Twelve" (Los Doce), Franciscans, who had secured the permission of the Pope and the Spanish monarchs to undertake the conversion of the natives.

The Franciscans began their labors in a happily significant fashion. They made their way from Veracruz to Mexico entirely on foot, a distance of 180 miles. Their clothes were scant and in bad condition, in some cases reduced to rags by the hardships of the journey. So

pathetic was their appearance, so poor were they, that the natives followed them in crowds, wondering at their humility and humble estate, exclaiming all the while "Moto linia, moto linia". One of the brothers upon asking what was meant was told that they were saying, "how poor, how poor". He immediately adopted that as his name; later this Franciscan became one of the most indefatigable preachers of the order. A street in Mexico City bears his name.

Another incident indicated the condition of The Twelve as they neared Mexico City, then known by the name of Tenochtitlán. One of them wrote: "So weak and worn were they (the Franciscans) that whenever they stumbled on a stone, they fell to the ground because they had no strength in their legs."[1] Nor was the admiration of the natives any less than that of the Spaniards. They exclaimed, "We love the fathers of St. Francis because they go about poor and unshod, like us, they eat what we eat, and they converse with us humbly; they love us like children."

Upon the arrival of The Twelve at the capital of the colony, they retired to rest for a fortnight. During this retreat of prayer and of physical recovery, plans were laid for the systematic conversion of the natives. A council, the first in the history of the colony, was held, where the land was divided into regions, each region being assigned to a pair of the brothers; shortly afterwards they departed for their respective fields, and the work began in earnest.

The Augustinians arrived in New Spain in the year 1533. The small group, eight of them, set to work with no less energy than the Franciscans, recruiting workers and building temples, monasteries and convents. By the end of 1572 they had constructed 46 convents, had founded a college in Mexico in 1537, had distinguished themselves for their results in Michoacán, and had even launched the missionary movement toward the Phillipines.

No less important was their interest in the founda-

[1]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 p. 174.

tion of a University at Mexico City. They enlisted the interest and support of the wealthy colonists, petitioned the king, and finally, with the assistance of Archbishop Zumárraga, saw their dreams realized. Outstanding among the Augustinians for his wide learning, his erudition and his earnestness, was Fray Alonso de la Veracruz, one of the Church's first great men.

The Dominicans and Jesuits trail later toward the middle and the last half of the century, contributing with distinctive genius, ability and leaders to the establishment of the Church.

The work cut out for these missionaries throws into relief the devotion they must have possessed to attack it with such vigor. There were eleven chief dialects, representing the most important autonomous tribes. In the whole territory there were no less than 51 idioms or local patois, more or less clearly defined, besides 63 dialects, which have since disappeared. Furthermore, there were more than 70 known variations of the 51 idioms, all of which represented bewildering problems to the priestly linguists. Into this labyrinth were launched all the ingenuity and learning of the missionaries, who, in the course of time, reduced this babel of tongues to a very few, and these finally gave way to the Castilian. One went so far as to propose the adoption of latin as the official and common medium. Four men distinguished themselves in the achievements of philology: Fr. Andrés de Olmos, Fr. Antonio de los Reyes, Fr. Alonso de Molina, and Miguel de Guevaras. For accomplishment in any single field, that in the translation and deciphering of the dialects and tongues stands without parallel.

Some writers have affirmed that the labors of the early missionaries were assisted by the traditions that existed among the natives of an ancient form of Christianity introduced some time in the eighth century. They support their contentions by pointing to the crosses of Tepic, of Palenque and of Querétaro. There seem to have existed some customs and usages very similar to Christian practice, such as baptism, confession, communion and benediction, as well as the annointment of

rulers and generals. The persistence of the legends woven around the figure of Quetzalcoatl lend much weight to this theory, especially in view of the precepts taught by this teacher, the cosmogony which he expounded and the circumstances of his advent and disappearance—all strikingly similar to Christian teaching and tradition. In general, however, it can be said that the evidence in this respect is not conclusive; and, if there was pre-hispanic evangelization, it left no material gain in favor of the Catholic missionaries.

Some of the difficulties which confronted the preacher have been indicated, such as the multiplicity of tongues. Equally important was the difficulty presented by the immense numbers of natives, and their nomadic customs. Said Fray Vasco de Quiroga, bishop of Michoacán, speaking on this point: "There are so many Indians that they are like stars of the sky . . . so that they cannot be counted; and their manner of living is a chaos and confusion, so that no one understands their things and their ways, nor is it possible to put them in good order like good Christians . . . they live spread abroad over the country, with no towns or villages, but each one with his plot of corn . . .".[1]

A frequent charge levelled against the Church is that in her zeal to establish the western civilization she destroyed one that was superior in many respects. But consideration of this issue is so wide that it falls quite beyond the limits of this study. Undeniably, it is true that many precious records were destroyed along with the temples that housed them—paintings, papyrii, hieroglyphics, statuary, etc. But the civilization that produced a unique art also produced many repulsive practices, like human sacrifice. The Church aimed its attack against any and all things that smelled of the traditional worship, applying the flame to good and bad alike. The study of Aztec civilization such as it existed at the beginning of the conquest is an extensive subject in itself; and the polemic that has raged around whether or not the Church substituted something better for it must remain

[1]Historia de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 p. 311.

an open question, with the advantage of proof leaning heavily on the side of the Church, for the present. Meanwhile, those who maintain the opposite point of view, will find consolation in the philosophy of Netzahualcóyotl, who said, years before Cortés sailed from Cuba, "Oh, great princes, brave captains, and faithful friends, let us hope, let us strive for heaven, for all things there are eternal and nothing is corrupt."

Whether the new order was superior to the old or not, it is evident that the Church was bent on making the substitution promptly and effectively. We can review its accomplishments in public charity and education, and mention briefly the devotion and zeal which led not a few to the sufferings of martyrdom.

Fray Juan de Zumárraga, the first archbishop of New Spain, took the lead in the development of humanitarian and educational institutions. In 1540 he founded the Hospital del Amor de Dios, assigning to it an annuity from his own income. Mainly due to his liberality, this institution continued its charitable work for many generations. He was instrumental in organizing and establishing two colleges, one of them for girls, the first of their kind in the New World. To these worthy activities must be added the founding of the University, the introduction of the printing press, in 1544, the importation, at his suggestion, of donkeys, mules and other pack animals, the impulse given to the study and cultivation of the silk industry, and the project of founding a school of arts and trades exclusively for natives. The college of Texcoco, founded in 1529, enlisted his active interest and soon came to depend almost entirely on his munificence. Fray Zumárraga co-operated with Fray Mendoza to establish the college of San Juan de Letrán, one that later became the most flourishing in the colony.

Though Fray Zumárraga was the most active in the spreading of education and charity, he was by no means alone. Close behind him came the amiable and unselfish Vasco de Quiroga, whose early labors in Michoacán revealed a kindly genius. His greatest single achievement was the Hospital of Santa Fe. So substantial a

beginning did Vasco de Quiroga impart to this institution that even as late as 1850 we hear praises of it from the lips of a liberal general. In his personal life, this venerable prelate was without a peer. At the age of ninety he is seen, at the point of death, mounting his mule to make a visit to one of his distant flocks. He died on the journey.

Another institution of uncommon interest was the first hospital founded in Mexico, that of Our Lady, a gift of Hernando Cortés, who in this manner hoped "to unburden his conscience from any fault or sin that might grieve it". It was said by a contemporary of the surgeons and doctors who attended the sick at this hospital that "the Indians cure the sick more quickly and with more certainty, in many cases giving relief to the Spaniards from ailments that they had had for many years." And, adds the commentator, "The Indian herb doctors and medicine men cured our wounded and sick much more promptly than our own (Spanish) doctors, because the former do not know how to prolong the illness so that they will be paid more."

In 1529 the Colegio de Nuestra Señora de la Caridad was established, dedicated exclusively to the care of orphan girls of mestizo blood.

Interesting and instructive are the regulations that the founders of these institutions formulated for their management. The hospital for lepers founded in Mexico City by Dr. Pedro López was obliged "to admit the poor and the rich, Spaniards, Indians, Negroes, mestizos and mulattos; the king shall be the patron and guardian; there shall be one doctor at least who will serve the sick for the love of God (without pay); the inmates must work at such tasks as they can, going out into the streets to ask alms; strictest obedience must be observed at all times."[1]

For the exclusive education of the children of Peninsular Spaniards (those born in Europe) Vasco de Quiroga established the widely-known Colegio Real de San Nicolás Obispo. For internal organization, discipline and progressiveness, this center of learning long

[1]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 pp. 410-415.

held first place in the colony. Notwithstanding the exclusive character of the institution, Vasco de Quiroga permitted the children of the natives who had helped to construct the building to enroll in the college. He clearly acknowledged the contribution of the natives in this respect, saying, "In recompense for what the Indians of this city of Michoacán and of the neighborhood contributed (for they constructed the buildings at their own cost) be it permitted that the children of those that helped in the labor receive instruction in our college".[1]

It is apparent, then, that the Church entered from the very beginning into a full and unlimited control of the educational agencies of New Spain. The absence of any other agency to undertake the work and the indifference of lay Spaniards to the exigencies of the natives gave the Church a sweeping monopoly on public and private instruction; the effects of that monopoly are palpable to the present day, when the Church is fighting inch by inch to retain its control on the schools and colleges of Mexico.

Cuevas, the Jesuit historian, is right when he says that "strictly speaking, public instruction in New Spain was due entirely to the efforts of the holy Catholic church".[2]

The printing press was under the surveillance of the Inquisition. Nothing was admitted into the country which did not first receive the approval of ecclesiastical censorship; and everything that was printed in the shops of the colony was in some way related to the dogma or the creed of the Church, such as prayer books, testaments and lives of the saints. "The liberal philosophy of the 18th century", writes one historian, "filtered into New Spain in the form of loose sheets inserted between the pages of Bibles and other books which the ecclesiastical authorities of Spain had approved."[3] And this fact was, in Mexico, only one aspect of the extended battle that the Church waged against the 18th century philosophy throughout Latin-America. Says Eyzaguirre, "The free

[1]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 p. 399.
[2]Ibid., p. 382.
[3]Historia de México—Leon. p. 330.

importation of all sorts of books was the chief weapon used successfully by the radical propogandists in Uruguay".[1]

The early Church took no chances of losing this iron grip on education and public instruction. The First Provincial Council, held in 1555 in Mexico City, made the following declaration: "We have been informed that in some places there are no clergymen or priests to supervise the schools; and because from this condition arise many inconveniences, we therefore command: that where there are no ministers or priests to supervise said schools, *there shall be none;* but in each village three Indians of worth and reputation shall be charged with teaching the Christian doctrine to the children".[2] This same Council decreed that "no sermons shall be preached to the natives in their own tongue and no doctrine shall be translated from the Castilian, unless it first be examined by a clergyman who understands the tongue into which the translation is to be made."[3]

Perhaps in no other way did the early builders of the Church leave more conclusive evidence of their ceaseless activity and their enterprise than in the construction of temples, ranging from the humble parish chapel to the architectural gems of the cities, such as the cathedrals of Mexico, Puebla, Guadalajara and Morelia. The visitor may not walk one block in any direction in cities like Puebla or Guadalajara without passing at least three and sometimes five churches. The panorama of any Mexican city is invariably a monotonous expanse of flat-roofed houses broken at frequent intervals by the belfries and towers of the temples of worship. To the fifteen thousand churches that dot the land today must be added the countless convents, monasteries, episcopal palaces, chapels, etc., that form the other portion of the construction program of the Church. "The atmosphere is heavy with religiosity," as one observer put it.

The question occurs—who built these churches, colleges and monasteries? The common answer is that the

[1]Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 1 p. 115.
[2]Concilios Provinciales. Ch. lxvi.
[3]Ibid., Ch. lxix.

Church did. True and false. The Church directed the enterprise; it furnished the brains, the ideas; but the Indians furnished the sweat, the rock and mortar, and the money wherewith to buy the material where it was not available.

From time to time Catholic writers have attempted to find in the multiplicity of churches and other buildings in the New World possessions of Spain, a conclusive proof of the munificence of the mother country and the prodigality of the Roman See. With this in mind one Catholic author says of the religious edifices of Peru: "Cuzco has numberless magnificent buildings . . . such is the splendid cathedral, precious monuments erected by the piety and liberality of its bishops; and such is the monastery of San Francisco, into which Catholic Spain emptied treasures without measure."[1] Further on, speaking of Puebla, Mexico, he says, "In Puebla there are magnificent temples and seminaries founded by the bishops with their own money and sustained by them from their personal wealth."[2]

This is stretching the truth. In fact, it is misrepresenting it. We have seen above how Vasco de Quiroga condescended to impart instruction to Indian children because their fathers "had constructed the buildings at their own cost." (supra p. 26) During the construction of the cathedral of Mexico, one-third of the cost was allotted to the natives, besides the physical labor, which they carried exclusively. Such was the zeal to construct more and more churches at the expense of the natives, that in the town of Ocuituco Archbishop Zumárraga was compelled to prohibit further construction because "more buildings had been erected than the Indians could support".[3]

Contrasting with the unfounded claims of such as we have cited, we read the frank and open confession of a Catholic bishop, D. Francisco Blanco, contained in a letter written to a priest in 1565, advising him on his duties as pastor. Said Bishop Blanco, "The priest should

[1]Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 1 p. 525.
[2]Ibid., p. 233.
[3]Colección de Genaro García. Vol. 15 pp. 83-84.

love the Indians, tolerating with patience their impertinences, considering that his tilma (native dress) covers us, his sweat is our sustenance, and with his labor he builds for us our churches and the houses in which we live".[1] We shall have an opportunity to see later on how even the exemption from paying tithes was in reality a false front to cover a steady exploitation of the Indians.

Keeping these facts in mind, the Catholics of today should remember that, if the Church willed a rich legacy of temples and beautiful cathedrals to the Mexican people, it simply left them that which their own hands had builded and their own scanty resources had supported.

Some of the principal figures of the early Church have already been mentioned, such as Fray Zumárraga and Vasco de Quiroga, whose work has been briefly noted. In justice to the truth, something must be said concerning the other brilliant characters whose humanism and charity, learning, unselfishness and sincere Christian piety carried them even to the stake.

To Chile, Peru and Bolivia, Rome sent such men as Antonio Vieyra, Luis de Valdivia, and Angel del Prado. To Mexico there came men of the stamp of Bartolomé de las Casas, Pedro de Gante, and Julian Garcés. Of these a brief word.

Pedro de Gante, a distant relative of Charles V, in 1521 obtained permission, along with two other companions, to leave for the Indies on a mission of conversion and evangelization. The three left the City of Ghent in Flanders, arriving in New Spain in 1522. A deep scholar and a man of vast energies, he immediately undertook to spread the faith in the vicinity of the capital of the colony. He established his center at Texcoco, where he founded a college whose direction and teaching duties were entirely on his shoulders. He built over one hundred churches and chapels, translated numerous holy writings, systematized the dialects of his region by means of dictionaries and grammars, and organized preaching centers under the direction of his own pupils. For fifty years he labored in obscurity, never returning to Europe. He died in 1572 at the age of 90, beloved by all his flock.

[1]Concilios Provinciales—"Avisos." Appendix, p. 387.

Julian Garcés is one of the most attractive, virile and dominating figures in early church history. Coming to Tlaxcala as the first bishop of that dioces, he soon familiarized himself with the deplorable condition of the natives. His name jumped into prominence when he wrote his famous defense of the Indians in a letter to Pope Urban. Not a few prelates, especially among the Dominicans, had steadily urged the Pope to pronounce the natives "irrational animals", incapable of receiving the faith and unworthy the treatment of intelligent beings. Had this been done, the effects would have been tragic for the aborigines. Their last protection from the greedy "encomendero" would have been destroyed and they would have descended to the category of worse than pack animals. Fray Julian Garcés jumped to their defense, expounding to the Pope the iniquity of the proposal in terms that none other had dared use before the Roman pontiff. He painted the virtues of his flock, praised their industry and perseverance, attacked bitterly the treatment accorded them by the Spaniards, and finished with one of the most humane, most eloquent pleas ever made in behalf of the natives of New Spain.

Fray Garcés's eloquence bore fruit in the papal Bull "Unigenitus", which declared the Indians rational beings, fully capable of being initiated into the ways of the faith, and "worthy the treatment of human beings equal in the sight of God".

Beside Garcés stands the figure which is perhaps the best known and the most revered among the friends and defenders of the Indians in the days of the Conquest, Fray Bartolomé de las Casas.

Fray de las Casas was not the gentle soul he is usually pictured as being. He was impetuous to a fault and had a singular intolerance for the opinions of others. Someone has said of him that "he was incapable of seeing the attenuating facts, of hearing counsel; he was exaggerated and provoking in his speech, lacking in tact and in practical knowledge".[1] He spent only a year and a half in his dioces in Chiapas, and during that brief time

[1]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 pp. 325-328.

busied himself with quarrels and controversies with the civil authorities as well as with his own subordinates. He left Chiapas in a huff, never to return.

Fray de las Casas was, however, extremely sensitive to the suffering of the Indians under Spanish rule. He himself had been an "encomendero" for eight years in Cuba, where he "took advantage of the Indians as much as he could", to use his own phrase. In 1514 he underwent a complete conversion, and along with it came a deep revulsion against his own past and against the positive cruelty of the land owners. He joined the Dominican brotherhood, gave away his possessions, and returned to Spain to plead for the Indian before the royal court. His best work, "La Destrucción de las Indias", is a terrific indictment of the extortion, exploitation and inhuman methods of the Spanish landlords. He went so far as to suggest the importation of negro slaves to take the place of native slavery. Fray de las Casas, the "protector of the Indians", died in Madrid in 1560. A statue to his memory has been erected on the east side of the cathedral in Mexico City.

No amount of subsequent bitterness between liberals and conservatives has tinged in the least the universal respect and gratitude in which the memory of these men is held. They gave body and color to the Golden Age of the Church in Mexico, when few were those who disdained the displeasure of popes and kings as they clamorded for justice for the enslaved Indian.

Hardly known and but lightly mentioned in history are those who first found the way of martyrdom while preaching to the savage tribes of the interior. Such were Fr. Juan Calero, Fr. Antonio de Calero, Fr. Juan de Padilla, and Fr. Bernardo de Corsin. Better known than these is Fr. Felipe de Jesús Margil, the first creole to be beatified, who met his death as a missionary to Japan.

These, then, were the pioneers of the Catholic Church in Mexico, and these were their works. The social organization of the new country passed into their hands from those of the soldier, and their influence on the habits,

customs and usages of the people was so deeply driven that it forms part and parcel of social life in the southern republic today. The social history of the Conquest and Domination is the history of the Church. We shall turn now to observe what part it played in the political life of the colony, and attempt to find the earliest precedents which established the spiritual power as an integral part of the civil, military and political administration of the land.

§

When the days of fighting and destruction were over, two serious problems presented themselves, both of vital importance to the welfare of the colony. First, the problem of holding the native masses in submission; and, second, the problem of organizing the militant Church so that its work of giving a trend to the organization of the embryonic society might be most effective. The end was in reality one—that of assuring the domination of the European element. But the problem was complicated because there entered the question of internal disclipine of the Church, where, theoretically speaking, the civil authority, which had so much at stake, could not intervene.

The organization of powers and the delineation of jurisdiction between civil and ecclesiastic authorities was from the beginning in complete chaos. Orders on things temporal were issued by the archbishop, only to be countermanded by the viceroy, or perhaps answered in retaliatory spirit by some command in the realm of things spiritual. More than once the high dignitaries of the Church and the equally elevated ones of the State engaged in the merry pastime of calling one another provoking names in the middle of the public thoroughfares, with the consequent injury to the dignity of both sides.

That this chaos and confusion existed because both the civil and ecclesiastical powers depended on the king is apparent. But the situation became more and more aggravated as time passed because neither part had any idea of the extent of its privileges or rights to legislate or issue decrees; for that matter, neither side cared to

determine that extent, accepting the situation as a necessary evil.

It would be ideal for purposes of clear exposition to study the occasions when the civil power intervened in the internal organization of the Church, and when the Church extra-limited itself and meddled in purely civil matters. Within the limits of this study, that should be quite impossible. We can at best give a rapid survey of the numerous clashes between the Church and the civil government, letting the reader acquaint himself with absolute confusion that reigned, and the intimate unity that existed between the two powers by virtue of this confusion.

The point is important. The highest aim of the liberal thinkers in Mexico has been the separation, in practice as well as in theory, of the Church and State. In the period we are studying, we can see the most remote precedents that established a tradition of union, not separation, between these two entities, and which constitutes the essence of the religious question in Mexico.

If the Church had initiated its labors with a compact, thoroughly disciplined hierarchy, perhaps it would have succeeded in having its way at all times. The truth of it was, however, that the Church was badly disorganized by dissension within its ranks, and this division of the house against itself at once permitted inroads on its authority and handicapped the expression of its legitimate rights.

And what was the nature of this internal disorganization?

In the first place, it was not precisely a retrogression. The Church rose to power in the second quarter of the 16th century because of the sacrifice of its individual members, like Pedro de Gante and Fray Zumárraga. The glory of the Church during this period rested on the heroism of individuals, not on the efficiency of a smooth-working organization. But the epoch of heroism and sacrifice could not last always, first, because the men were wanting, and, second, because the circumstances did not demand it. Comes then the period of organization, when, if the Church is to hold what it has

gained, it must depend on group efficiency, on co-operative effort. And that was a serious problem.

Fray Juan de Zumárraga, the first archbishop of New Spain, began that gigantic task. With no traditions except the dogmatic ones of Catholicism to assist him, he had to forge an organization out of the material sent him from Europe. He had to fuse into one phalanx the Dominicans, Franciscans, Augustinians, Jesuits and Carmelites, with their divergent aims and petty prejudices. Furthermore, some of the individual material was not of the best quality, as can be seen from the instructions sent by the king to the ecclesiastical heads in New Spain.

And Mexico shared a condition common to all the new world possessions. Eyzaguirre, in his work that we have so often cited, says, "It must be confessed that the court . . . did not always select . . . the best and most acceptable elements to effect the progress and felicity of its colonies in America. Some of these elements, indeed, had grevious faults. The seculars looked ill upon the Jesuits, because these not only did not conform to their customs, but they also secured the esteem of the faithful, with injury to their (the secular) interests".[1] It is easy to surmise that these "unacceptable elements" also infiltrated into New Spain, to the woe of Fr. Zumárraga and his subalterns.

In point of fact, Phillip II often evinced his desire to purge the Mexican Church of this noxious element. In a royal cedule, dated in 1552, he said, "I have been told that some religious men, without having Our permission to go to that land, do so, disguising themselves as laymen and letting their beards grow; and when they have arrived there they put on the habit of the priest, and they do not set the example which one of their character should; consequently, I command you to enquire with diligence . . . if the priests . . . in that land have a license . . . and if you find any without it, compel them to return to our realm, and do not permit them to remain in that land".[2] In another place the same monarch, in

[1]Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 1 p. 23.
[2]Colección de Documentos—G. García. Vol. 15 p. 111.

a very direct and precise manner, exhorted the clergy "to be useful and industrious, and not to return to Spain, but to remain in the lands beyond the sea, to the service of God and the king".[1]

The question of discipline was further complicated by the presence of some intractable regulars who claimed exemption from archiepiscopal authority on the ground that they were independents, crusaders, etc. Concerning these recalcitrants, Phillip II ordered, "I command that these clericals who claim such exemption be thrown out of the land".[2] Fr. Zumárraga was only too glad to do so.

The personal conduct of the men of God was not always in conformity with their calling. Bancroft characterizes them rather harshly, saying, "With respect to the private life of the clergymen it can be said that they gave themselves to gluttony, to prostitution and many other degrading vices. The convents of the nuns were as disorderly as those of the priests, constituting a grave disturbance to the public peace and morality where ever they were found".[3]

The direct evidence gathered from the documents of early times seems to support many of these charges. In 1578 Phillip II instructed the Archbishop of Mexico concerning the punishment given to erring priests. "Whenever one of the priests (read the royal letter) who are under your direction . . . lives in a dishonorable fashion, and he is caught or noted in the practice of some vice, and you are informed thereof, if he be found guilty, only some pecuniary punishment shall be imposed upon the culprit".[4]

But the most illuminating writings on this point are the articles of the First and Second Provincial Councils, held in Mexico City in 1555 and 1565. From the articles of these notable ecclesiastical conclaves, we have selected some of the portions that reveal the moral level of the clergy during the Domination. Whatever inferences may be drawn therefrom are likely to be justified, since these canonical rules were not gratuitous admoni-

[1]Colección de Documentos—G. García. Vol. 15 p. 171.
[2]Ibid., p. 56.
[3]History of Mexico—Bancroft. Vol. 2 p. 710.
[4]Colección de Documentos—García. Vol. 15 p. 211.

tion, given without cause or reason. They responded to the urgent necessity of curbing the immorality that promised to bring ruination not only upon the privileged classes but also on society as a whole.

Chapter II of the Constitution of the Council of 1565 commands that "no priest or clergyman who administers the sacraments may demand a fee or payment for such ministration, nor shall they command the natives to make offerings".[1]

"Criminal procedure against clergymen shall be heard in secret tribunal" . . . [2] "because we are obliged to protect the honor of the priesthood, seeing that they be not punished publicly". In 1565 by royal decree it was ordered that accusations against priests should not be made public, "and when the case is of great scandal, the proceedings should be secret, because otherwise many inconveniences would follow". "The priests shall not be taken before the magistrates for saying injurious words, nor shall they be taken to jail for such" . . . "because no one is so meek and peaceful that, if sufficiently provoked, or with certain passion, will not say an injurious word against his neighbor".[3]

In another chapter the same Council (Ch. lxxxi) prohibited the magistrates from prosecuting clergymen for the crime of adultery, if the husband of the woman in question was living, on the ground that the aggrieved husband alone had the duty or right to protect his own honor.

These brief excerpts indicate that all was not well respecting the morality of the priesthood. Evidently simony had become so brazen and open that a Provincial Council had to take measures against it. The vocabulary of the priest seemed to have included a number of choice epithets then in vogue, else the Council would not have deemed itself obliged to dissert upon the weakness of the human tongue, especially the clerical tongue. And, finally, it is interesting to ponder on the logical causes that evoked that prohibition to magistrates on the prose-

[1] Concilios Provinciales—20. Ch. ii.
[2] Ibid., Ch. lxxxii.
[3] Ibid., Ch. lxxviii.

cution of adulterous priests. Catholic apologists stoutly deny that this evil ever stalked through the quiet cloisters of the convents and monasteries. And yet, the evil evidently existed in gross proportions compelling a Provincial Council to protect itself from that blotch by exemption from civil action. Undeniably, this was open-faced protection of the priests, as no indication was given of an attempt to cut to the root of the matter.

Not only were there sounds of revelry among the hooded ranks, but what was equally vexatious, there were frequent open breaks between the various regular orders. Writes the King of Spain on one occasion, "The Rev. Dr. Pedro Moya de Contreras informs me that the friars of the Order of St. Augustine, St. Francis and St. Dominic, against the wishes of the archbishop . . . go about and preach in the towns assigned to the priests, persuading the Indians not to obey these (the priests) but to obey the friars; and the Indians are convinced easily, from which results much scandal between the priests and the friars, setting a bad example to the natives".[1]

On another occasion the Dominicans and Franciscans came to blows over the possession of a church in a small village; fists, lances and even vases figured profusely in the mélée.

The most notorious schism within the ranks came with the advent of Msgr. Antonio Palafox to the mitre of Puebla. Palafox was above all things bellicose and intolerant of opinions other than his own; and on his return to Puebla, he opened a bitter fight against the Franciscans which gave much material for gossip to colonial society. The grossest insults were proffered by both sides, sometimes descending to the depths of calumny and obscenity that would sound natural only on the lips of the most depraved layman. Many years passed before the repugnant fumes of that passionate ebullition had drifted away.

In these deplorable conditions the royal court always evinced a deep interest. We have already noted that by virtue of the right of investiture the Spanish monarchs

[1]Concilios Provinciales—"Avisos." Appendix, p. 327.

exercised a direct control over the Mexican prelates. But the superiority was manifested in more than just the official commands and decrees. Phillip II especially often spoke to the high prelates of the Mexican Church in a fatherly tone, advising and entreating a more harmonious life within the Church itself as well as with the civil power.

Two notable examples of this are found in the royal correspondence of that epoch. The first, written in 1556, reads, "We have been informed that you are in the habit of censuring the secular judges in the cases which they try, with justice, against delinquents; that you pretend, by your attitude, to prevent the imposition of the deserved penalty. Especially have we been informed of this, your conduct, in the case of one Quijada, who was a soldier of Pizarro and who was condemned to the galleys, and who later committed many other crimes in that land; and because it is not reasonable that such evil-doers should find shelter in the Church we pray and charge you . . . that hereafter you moderate your censures against the judges, and that you exercise great care in punishing delinquent priests".[1]

And, in 1576 . . . "and I charge you to continue to have good correspondence with our viceroy and other persons of responsibility in the government of that land, because it is altogether convenient and profitable for the affairs and well-being of both your authority and theirs; procure always to avoid questions of dissension, but always manifesting to one another that nothing can disrupt that quiet and tranquillity, especially when it is so clear which things pertain to each authority; and to observe this you are especially constrained by virtue of your position and dignity".[2] The king was greatly mistaken when he said that "it is so clear which things pertain to each authority"; events show that no one had a clear idea of the things that were Ceaser's and those that were God's.

To Fray Alonso de Montúfar, Phillip II wrote in similar terms: "I am pleased with your desire that there

[1]Colección de documentos—García. Vol. 15 p. 121.
[2]Ibid., p. 199.

shall be in that land complete conformity and peace between our royal (civil) jurisdiction and the ecclesiastical, and I charge you to strive for it in every way possible".[1]

But no less solicitous was the monarch in his instructions to the viceroys and other civil officials. In 1553, before ascending the throne of Spain, he wrote to the viceroy and oidores: "As you well know, there are in that land many bishops and other prelates, persons of righteous life and good examples, whom it is just to treat with due honor and respect . . . I command that you honor and observe great courtesy toward all the prelates who reside in that land, that they may enjoy the authority and prestige that will greatly profit our Christian doctrine . . . and, further, that you care for the cathedrals with great attention, maintaining their prerogatives and privileges, and that you favor them in all things".[2]

When occasion demanded it, the king assumed a stern and commanding tone towards the civil officials who in some way infringed on the extensive privileges of the Church. For example, the viceroy, Mendoza, who was a Knight of the Order of Santiago, considered that a sufficient reason for exempting himself from paying the tithe. Charles V wrote back, "I command you that from now on you pay the tithe that you are obliged to contribute, notwithstanding any impediment that you may allege".

It is quite obvious, from these and numerous other sources that could be cited, if space permitted, that the Spanish court was constantly endeavoring to maintain the equilibrium of the civil and religious authorities; entreating the one and the other to co-operate and to refrain from contentious issues. Unfortunately, the wishes of the king were seldom obeyed to the letter or the spirit, and the spirit of competition, jealousy and vanity of both parts grew day by day.

As has already been said, it is difficult to determine in every case whether the cause of discord between civil and ecclesiastical leaders was the fault of the former or

[1]Colección de documentos—García. Vol. 15 p. 115.
[2]Ibid., p. 92.

the latter. Suffice it to say that it certainly was caused by the continuous extra-limitation of both, and the chaotic demarcation, or lack thereof, between their respective spheres.

The long history of incidents that make up this unedifying chain of conflicts goes back to the conspiracy at court which threw Columbus out of favor. Chief among those who misrepresented the discoverer was Fray Boyle, intriguer and sycophant. When Hernando Cortés was marching on his way to fight Narvaez, he sent Fr. Almedo ahead with letters to Narvaez and with gold for his troops. So effective was the corruptive bribery effected by the good father that not a little of Cortés's success against Narvaez was due to it.

The first serious clash came in the year 1525. Cortés had gone on his ill-fated Honduras expedition leaving one Estrada in charge of the government of the colony. A conspiracy sprang up, headed by Albornez, who held meetings with his confederates in the convent of San Francisco. The charge was spread abroad that the clergymen were the real heads of the insurrection. Fr. Martin, head of the Dominican order, was indignant. He refuted the charge, fulminated an interdict on the city, ordered the closing of the churches, and retired with his retinue to Texcoco. The strategy was more than effective. Popular horror over the interdict was aroused, and the mobs compelled the usurpers to cede the government to Estrada. Fr. Martin returned in triumph to Mexico City.

Again, in 1530, when Fr. Zumárraga was archbishop, the Church and the oidores broke lances. The oidores had torn down the doors of the convent of San Francisco and had manhandled two delinquents who had taken sanctuary there. Fr. Zumárraga, on hearing of this, put on the robes of his high office, and, heading a motly crowd of rioters, appeared before the doors of the city jail to demand the release of the prisoners and an apology for the insult to the Church. There followed a scene which might well be taken from opera bouffé. Delgadillo, the ring leader of the oidores, stood on a balcony and

called the good prelate all sorts of names; Zumárraga brandished his mitre and called back to Delgadillo "you're another", or words to that effect. Some priests who were in the mob went so far as to unhinge the door of the building, at which Delgadillo became infuriated and threatened to break his lance on the ecclesiastical craneums.

The débacle took such proportions that the royal court itself sat in judgment on the case. Zumárraga went to Spain to defend himself. He succeeded exceedingly well, for the goods of the oidores were confiscated, two were imprisoned and finally expatriated. Zumárrage, after receiving a verbal spanking for having uttered such undignified words in a public place, received a clean bill of health; whereupon he lifted the interdict that had weighed on the colonial capital.

A further cause of dissension was the fact that the archbishop was vested with the title of Protector of the Indians. By virtue of this, he repeatedly scolded the encomenderos for their conduct towards the natives; and as the oidores were all owners of extensive domains, they cordially hated the prelate. Zumárraga's sermons must have been vitriolic, for he himself says that "they (the oidores) flee from my sermons and go to banquets and orgies instead". Zumárraga himself was not above having slaves, though he treated them with exemplary kindness and consideration.

To what extent this good man figured in the life of the community may be summed up in the words of Cuevas, "In all the great social and political affairs, Zumárraga always stood in the most prominent place".[1] The same author comments further on, "From what has been said, the reader can see that the foundation of the Church in Mexico was carried out under the most stormy circumstances".[2]

Things continued in this state throughout the Spanish domination. In 1563 King Phillip sent a sharp reprimand to the bishop of Guadalajara, who had forcibly resisted the Audiencia when the latter attempted to pun-

[1]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas.Vol. 1 p. 246.
[2]Ibid., p. 270.

ish an Indian who had taken sanctuary in the cathedral. "You have transgressed against our royal person and against your own episcopal decency and dignity", said the irate king.

From far off Michoacán came the repeated remonstrances of Vasco de Quiroga, who complained that the encomenderos prevented the Indians from passing through their lands when on their way to receive the sacraments, extracting inordinate tribute for the privilege of settling on the land, and numerous similar abuses.

In 1624 there took place a serious clash between the archbishop, Dr. de la Serna and the viceroy, Diego de Carrillo. Both were evenly matched—quick of temper, hasty and obdurate. The prelate laid hands on the now much-used weapon, the interdict, and the viceroy answered by laying hands on de la Serna and sending him under guard toward Veracruz, with the purpose of deporting him. A tumult broke out on the 15th of January of that year. The mob, incited by subalterns of the archbishop, attacked the palace, sacked it and finally set fire to it. One agile friar, named Salazar, shedding his dignity and his flowing robes, climbed to one of the balconies and tore down the royal standard. The viceroy fled the city that night, and as he was leaving out one gate the archbishop was entering another, in triumphal procession. Diego de Carrillo informed the royal court that, first, the clergy had incited the people to riot; second, the greater part of the inhabitants of the city had participated; third, the hatred against the Spaniards had played an important role in the affair.

The situation can be no better synthesized than by quoting the comments of a modern writer, Pérez Lugo. He says, "The inadequate and bad deliniation that existed between the lay and ecclesiastical powers permitted the civil authorities to legislate in matters that were plainly not of their incumbency; such were the law that compelled everyone to partake of holy communion and to confess on the deathbed; that which prohibited excessive and noisy expressions of mourning and grief for the departed; and the one which explained what con-

duct should be observed by those who assisted in the religious services in the churches. Meanwhile, the Church was permitted to regulate such strictly civil affairs as the marriage contract and the administration of cemeteries.''[1]

During this long period of Spanish rule, it was a common occurrence to see an archbishop seated on the throne of the viceroys, exercising contemporaneously the full powers of his civil as well as his religious investiture. The following exercised such power up to 1808:

D. Pedro Moya y Contreras, 1584-1585.
D. Fr. García Guerra, 1611-1612.
D. Juan de Palafox, 1642 (June to November).
D. Marcos de la Torre y Rueda, 1648-1649.
D. Payo Enriquez de Ribera, 1675-1680.
D. Juan de Ortega y Montañes, 1696-1697.
D. Juan Antonio de Vizarión, 1734-1740.
D. Alonso Nuñez de Haro, 1787.
D. Francisco Javier Lizario, 1809-1810.

Out of this situation it is illogical to suppose that any idea of the separation of Church and State could emerge. The ideal, in practice and in theory, as we have seen, was the antithesis of this; and, it was this tradition, this dogma, that 19th century liberalism had to combat.

A study of this nature cannot omit a few observations on that much-discussed and controverted question: what treatment did the natives receive from the hands of the Spanish colonizers or encomenderos, and what was the attitude of the Church toward such?

But first a brief digression on the subject of the Inquisition. This terrible agency of the hierarchy made its début in New Spain with the coming of the Dominican friars in 1532. Three years later Fr. Zumárraga was appointed chief inquisitor, with discretionary powers. From 1536 until 1543, 131 cases were tried, 13 of them involving natives, and only one carrying the death penalty.

The first Indian to pay the supreme penalty for

[1]La Cuestion Religiosa en México—Lugo. p. 6.

apostasy was Don Carlos, king of Texcoco. This unfortunate cacique was executed and then burned at the stake upon conviction of idolatry and preaching against Christian dogma. His case raised such a storm, however, that in 1575, by royal edict, natives were exempted from inquisitorial penalties "considering that they are new in the faith and people of many weaknesses and little substance."

In 1571 the first official tribunal was established in Mexico, under the direction of Dr. Pedro Moya de Contreras. On the whole, the Inquisition did not single out the natives for persecution and any excesses against them, especially those that involved the stake, were promptly investigated by order of the king. The refined cruelties of the Inquisition were indeed repugnant, but that was its fundamental character, exercised against all alike, Spaniard and Indian.

Returning to the subject of the encomiendas. An "encomienda" was a grant of land given to a Spanish colonist by the king, in return for services rendered. The grantee was known as the "encomendero". With title to the land went title to the natives inhabiting it; so that they became a species of serfs or slaves, tied to the land and owned by the master.

The evil fruits of this system became apparent presently. To be sure, the Spanish conquerors did not wait to acquire title to the land before venting their spleen on the Indians. Bernal Díaz, genial and candorous historian, cites the branding of Indians as an example. He says, "Permission to brand the Indians was secured by Cortés's soldiers from the Royal Audiencia and the Geronimite Fathers . . . It was further arranged that the branding iron should be in charge of the town mayor, a senior regidor, and a priest, who should be persons of good repute".[1]

Whether the natives deserved this treatment, and that which we shall later describe, is very questionable. Fr. Zumárraga says that "the principal qualities of the Indian are: peaceful and tame; the adults do not quarrel

[1]True History of the Conquest—Bernal Diaz del Castillo. Vol. 5 p. 307.

unless they are drunk; they are all simplicity, sincerity and truthfulness; they are poor, humble and obedient, and to all things they say 'maya' (be it thus). Their patience is a marvel, they suffer without a groan or a sigh. Though they are tame, they do more through fear than through virtue; they are good workers, not needing anyone to command them. They are for the most part inclined to drunkeness''.[1] Fr. Julian Garcés had said as much and more on another occasion. The character of the Indian, however, did not serve to mitigate the mistreatment received from his Spanish master, and the iniquity of that system developed rapidly on the encomiendas.

Towards 1582, writes Genaro García, the natives were rapidly diminishing on account of the cruelty of the encomenderos; some had died from the effects of whipping, others from the excessive loads, others through lack of shelter, and still others ''because they hanged themselves, or because they ate poisonous herbs, to escape their sufferings''. Not even the mothers faltered; they killed their babies ''at birth, saying that they did so to keep them from their own sufferings''. So great did this mortality become that soon ''more than one-third of the inhabitants of the land were gone''.[2]

Extreme and inhuman as this treatment was, it must not be inferred that it accounted for the diminution in population entirely. Many severe plagues and epidemics had desolated the country, diseases introduced by the Spaniards and against which the natives were like so much chaff. In 1736, in Mexico City alone 50,000 natives died during an epidemic. It was at this time that the Virgin of Guadalupe was declared the patroness of the country against pestilence.

Even Phillip II and his successors became alarmed at this steady decrease in population, seeing in it, very naturally, an economic loss. Their concern can be studied at first hand in the various decrees which they issued on this point. To further curb this condition, the famous Laws of the Indies were framed and later re-

[1]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 pp. 55-56.
[2]Colección de Documentos—García. Vol. 15 Preface.

vised. About this code much has been said, pro and con. The Church has always considered it as the highest form of altruism ever expressed by a ruler toward his subjects, of a conqueror to the conquered. To be sure, they embodied ideals very different from those of the armed hosts that were annihilating the natives of the Adirondacks, the Floridas and the Great Lakes. There is another verdict on these laws, that expressed by Lorenzo de Zavala, who, writing in 1830, said, "They (the Laws of the Indies) determined the weight with which the Indian might be loaded; they determined the distance he might be driven, how he should be paid . . . To maintain this systematic order of oppression, it was essential that the oppressed should never be allowed to enter the rational world . . . The Laws of the Indies were nothing more than a prescribed method of domination over the Indians . . . They presuppose the existence of rights vested in the monarchs who gave them, rights over the lives and property of the conquered peoples".[1]

There is more than average truth in this, though the laws must be regarded in the light of the philosophy which prevailed in those times. Then, they were essentially altruistic, though faulty; today they would be legalized oppression.

At any rate, the condition of the natives was desperate. No one felt it more acutely than they, and here and there incipient revolts flared for a brief moment. In the village of Topia, Nueva Galicia, the Indians revolted against the cruel treatment of the mine owners. The bishop of that dioces, Mgr. Alonso de la Mota, finally pacified them. In Tehuantepec another revolt broke out as a protest against the extortion carried on by one Juan Arellano, mayor. The revolt took serious proportions and did not die out until the bishop, D. Alonso de Cuevas Dávalos, interceded on behalf of the authorities. Eloquent examples of the power which the Church exercised over the Indian mind, simple, believing, easily led.

Even as late as 1785, Zavala tells of being an eyewitness of this cruelty. "I have seen," he says, "many

[1]Ensayo Histórico—Zavala. Vol. 1 p. xxix.

Indians and their wives whipped in front of the church doors because they did not hear mass on the previous Sunday or holy-day. After the whipping they were obliged to kiss the hand of the executioner".[1]

The indifference of the Church to the physical maltreatment of the Indian was the natural fruit of its official attitude on the general land policy as embodied in the system of encomiendas. This official attitude was voiced as far back as 1544, and stood throughout the years as the norm and guiding star of the Church.

It will be remembered that the illustrious Fr. Bartolomé de las Casas had gone to the Spanish court to plead for the Indian and to urge radical changes in the imperial policy in the New World. As a result, the so-called Nuevas Leyes were promulgated.

Among these new laws was one that, had it been put into operation, would have initiated the agrarian revolution 374 years before its actual outbreak. It involved nothing less than a complete social, political and economic readjustment. The law read:

"We order and command: that from now henceforth no viceroy, audiencia, governor, discoverer or any other person may consign Indians to encomiendas . . . neither by sale, gift, nor renunciation; but, upon the death of the person at present owning said Indians, they shall become subjects of our Royal Crown" . . .[2] It will be noted that the aim was to emancipate the slaves, and not to confiscate property.

Obviously, land without slaves to work it was useless—that the encomenderos understood. It had the double-barrelled effect of emancipating the helots and of assuring an equitable distribution of land. When Tello de Sandoval, the emissary charged with enforcing this law, landed in Mexico, the Church dignitaries swung into action. A solemn conclave was called to discuss the law. This council was composed "of the most select of the secular and regular clergy, gathered together to give its opinion upon the law in question". In brief, the assembly decided against the law, and suggested its repeal. A

[1]Ensayo Histórico—Zavala. Vol. 1 p. xxi.
[2]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 p. 32.

committee was sent before Charles V, who consented to rescind the decree. The following reasons were given by the assembly for its action:

1. It (the law) would have destroyed all property in the land.
2. The Spaniards would emigrate to Spain because they could not possess lands in the colony.
3. If the Spaniards do not have encomiendas, many monks and priests would be deprived of support and sustenance.
4. This law would not give the Indians their freedom, but rather a supremacy over the Spaniards.
5. The Indians would be less willing to work.
6. Fr. de las Casas did not know the situation, therefore he sponsored this law.
7. The encomenderos would give better treatment to the Indians than the government officials.
8. The Indians, being owned by the encomenderos, could be better taught the Christian doctrine, because the owner could do with them what he pleased.

"And this", Cuevas exclaims in a rapture of pride, "was how the Church saved the social order and the Mexican nationality!"[1]

Three other reasons of a minor character were enumerated. But, there, in numbers 3, 4 and 6, stood the official policy and the attitude of the Church stripped of all casuistry. Forced into the open, the high prelates, the cream of the hierarchy, gave their assent to a regime that saddled a tremendous problem on the country, the bonds of which began to burst in 1910, at the first sign of revolt. Historians will do well to keep these antecedents in mind when they speak of "the social program of the Catholic Church in Mexico".

Such, then, was the complacent attitude of the Church towards the inequitable distribution of land in colonial times. As to its stand on the question of the treatment of the nations, a categorical statement cannot be made.

Undoubtedly, the greatest defenders of the Indian

[1]Hist. de la Iglesia en México—Cuevas. Vol. 1 p. 432.

pariah came from the ranks of the clergy. An illustrious galaxy composed of Luis de Valdivia, Julian Garcés, Bartolomé de las Casas, and Juan Zumárraga had brought messages of mercy and charity to the enslaved masses, and had crossed and re-crossed the Atlantic scores of times to plead in behalf of their red-skinned flocks. They are the men whose names have stood as traditional synonyms for justice; but there were others who, though obscure and unsung, followed their example in word and in deed.

Such a one was Fr. D. Francisco Blanco, whose letter of advice to a priest in New Spain has already been cited. Fr. Blanco exhorted his correspondent "to be as a father who cares for his children; the priest as a shepherd, whose duty is to care for his flock, that it may not wander, sicken or suffer attack; he is the judge who judges the penitent; the doctor, who cures with sound opinions and with good medicine; the teacher, who must teach the sane Christian doctrine".[1] And doubtless many others like this kindly friar, who sincerely attempted to carry out their mission of civilization.

To the misfortune of the Church, not all of its members considered their calling in the same light. Many there were, from the highest to the lowest in the hierarchy, who have left opprobrious records of wrath vented on these helpless victims, who considered the lash an effective way of inculcating Christian teaching.

One Fr. Diego de Landa became notorious for his harsh ways. In 1567 some natives of Tobemador, Yucatán, presented a petition to Phillip II asking for protection against that prelate and other Franciscan friars associated with him. These messengers of peace had hung some of the natives by the thumbs, placing large weights on their feet to increase the torturing tension. They had tied others on the backs of donkeys, had whipped them, and then had poured large quantities of water upon their bleeding bodies. "And from these torments many died and others were maimed", reads the petition to the king; "and from this it results that when

[1]Concilios Provinciales. Appendix p. 390.

the natives hear the name of Fr. Diego de Landa, their stomachs are turned", the petitioners add, with pardonable candor.

Fr. Diego was made bishop five years later for his pains.

In 1560, the following order had been sent by the king. It speaks for itself:

"Having been informed that some prelates and ecclesiastical judges impose pecuniary punishment upon the natives, in order to benefit the coffers of the Church, I command that such fines be no longer imposed upon the natives, but that they be punished by other means, according to law".[1]

In the same year, another royal letter of the same nature was sent to the monks of New Spain. It, too, needs no comment: "We have been informed that the monks of the orders of St. Francis, St. Dominic, and St. Augustine . . . have in their monasteries, dungeons, and wells where they imprison the Indians and whip them and keep them . . . and that they also shave their heads, which to the natives is taken as a great harm and injury . . . and because these things are not lawful . . . I command . . . that the monks cease from imprisoning said natives or throwing them in wells, or whipping them".[2] The personal testimony of Lorenzo de Zavala has been quoted above. Elsewhere the same author adds, "In many provinces the priests command the Indians to be beaten, because they do not pay the contributions on time, or for some act of disobedience".[3]

It can be seen from what precedes that there was no uniform criterion among the clergy as to their conduct toward the Indians. A word as to the official attitude of the Mexican Church, expressed at its First Provincial Council, held in 1555.

Chapter xcii of the Constitution of that council reads: "And because in many parts of our Constitution it would be doubted whether the fines and punishments . . . therein indicated are applicable to the Indians, as

[1]Colección de Documentos—García. Vol. 15 p. 132.
[2]Ibid., p. 139.
[3]Ensayo Histórico—Zavala. Vol. 1 p. xxxl.

they are to Spaniards, we hereby declare that . . . said fines and punishments are not understood as applicable to the Indians, except where expressly stated; this in consideration of their poverty, and because they are new in the faith, weak and faltering, and should be treated with benignity and toleration".[1]

Chapter xxvi of the Constitution of the Second Council declares "that it was not our intention (at the first Council) to compel the Indians to pay tithes, so that such tithes have never been collected, are not at present nor shall they be".[2]

Now, this has always been one of the boasts of Catholic apologists and enemies of liberal thought. There is a fly in the ointment, however.

This exemption from tithes responded to the instructions sent out to that effect by the king of Spain. By the next ship, there came a letter from the court, signed by the princess, to the effect that "the Real Audiencia will put into effect such means as are expedient, so that the Indians, *without being aware of it,* will contribute to the expenses of the Church". This step was urged "to compensate for the exemption from tithe paying which they enjoyed". The means employed to this end were the increase of the tribute, the cost of foodstuffs and a rise in fines and penalties. This very interesting document may be found complete in Genaro García's "Colección de Documentos Raros", Vol. 15, p. 21. Clearly, the truth of the epigram, "what they don't know won't hurt them", was early recognized by the Church.

It is time now to enumerate and discuss concretely the sources of power of the Roman Catholic Church during Spanish rule. If the analysis prove correct, something will have been gained that will clarify the history of the Church after 1810, and a contribution made toward a fair appraisal of the problem.

The power of the Church rested on four distinct supports. They were:

1. The union of the civil and ecclesiastical powers.
2. The complete control of education.

[1] Concilios Provinciales. Ch. xcii.
[2] Ibid., Ch. xxvi.

3. The privileges or "fueros" which it enjoyed.

4. The immense material wealth directly and indirectly controlled by the hierarchy.

It would be difficult to arrange these in the order of importance. The Church never ceded a jot or tittle on any one of them of her own accord, for they formed a thoroughly efficient and complementary whole from which emanated her omnipotence in all things temporal and spiritual. After a rapid survey of the four components, the reader may judge for himself as to their relative importance to the Church.

It has been shown that there never existed a nitid demarcation between the respective attributes of the civil and religious authorities. The question occurs: did this confusion and interweaving of the two powers result from the ineptitude of their leaders, from lack of political and social acumen? Not at all. The intimate union of Church and State responded to the prevailing ideology of the period and was consistently defended and expounded by laymen and clericals.

That was the policy of Spain wherever she conquered new worlds. Eyzaguirre, with his usual candor, affirms that "the work of the Jesuits in Brazil did not only have a religious significance, but also a strong political quality which the circumstances imparted to it. Without the Jesuits, the conquest of Brazil could not have been accomplished by the Portuguese; these would have lost the largest portion of the territory which the French claimed, and the very towns which they formed would have more than once suffered pillage and destruction".[1] Luis de Valdivia urged the court of Lisbon to send "zealous missionaries, and in a short time this land will be Christian and your laws will be obeyed".[2]

It would be as difficult to imagine a successful war of conquest by Spanish legions without the aid of the clergy as the winning of modern wars without propaganda, aeroplanes, submarines and super-dreadnaughts. The Spanish soldier was helpless after he had won the battle. His only security thereafter lay in the seed of

[1]Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 1 p. 19.
[2]Ibid., p. 17.

submission, or resignation, which must be sown in the mind of the native. The hooded sowers were needed, for the harvest was great, the laborers few and the stakes incalculable.

Mexico was conquered by the same sign. The virile tribesmen who had fought hand to hand with the terrifying Spaniard, who had measured the primitive tomahawk and lance with the blunderbuss and cannon of Cortés's intrepid men, who had flung themselves from the heights of their temples, defending their religion and their traditions, who had produced such incarnations of courage as Motecuzoma Ilhuicamina, who forged the Aztec empire, and Cuauhtemoc—this virility, this fiery spirit, cruel, if one may, but nevertheless a spirit—this intrepidity and fearlessness, in the course of short decades was changed to servility, submission, fear, pitiful moral deterioration, lack of initiative and absolute dependence on external impulses for movement and change. Whence this sudden and pathological disintegration of the spirit? The fear of the sword? That, and something more. "Ye are not of this world. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the kingdom of Heaven", said the Church. Of what use was rebellion? Were there not wounds from the sword of the soldier to suffer, and eternal damnation fulminated by the Church to bear forever if the bowed head dared to rise? Better to bear and hope for the next world.

"Upon this basis", says Zavala, historian of the early 19th century, "did the Spaniards erect the structure of the new society in Spanish America: the power of the sword and the influence of the clergy composed the governing element; they directed the morality, the sentiments, the character of the people. Outside of this limited circle, there was nothing, and that society marched from generation to generation in silence, the echo of its foot-steps unnoticed and unheard by the world".

A later writer synthesizes the situation in this manner. "During the Spanish rule, the Church allied itself to the powerful Spanish element, whose authority

and influence were decisive; it directed consciences and possessed the key to the education of youth, whom it educated in the maxims of an exclusivist and intolerant dogma and with no other goal than the mundane interests".[1]

As time went on, not only the native must be kept in check, but the steady influx of new immigrants must encounter an effective rein in the Church. For it was no longer the valorous knight errant who came to brave dangers for king and church. According to one authority, "already at the middle of the 16th century the population of New Spain was no longer a handful of conquerors face to face with a well defined mass of conquered peoples. No, it was a motly multitude, the dregs of Spain, who, by reason of their customs, could be called anything but civilized. The old conqueror, the creole, the mestizo, the negro, all so divided and heterogenous, that Fr. Juan de Zumárraga called New Spain the Babylon of this land".[2]

"In those times", wrote Abad y Queipo, "the clergy was the only force that could maintain the equilibrium of that incoherent society".

In truth, if one ask what other spiritual or material influence could hold such a conglomerate mass together, the answer is that there was none. This implied tremendous responsibilities, and the attacks that the Church has suffered subsequently are commensurate with the negligence to correspond to them.

And this body of men, the clergy, who someone has characterized as "the only disciplined body capable of leading the civilizing forces of the conqueror", gripped tenaciously the theory of the union of the Church and State.

Hermando Cortés had from the very beginning suggested its adaptation, "as a political instrument, useful for the solid foundation of the king's rule in the newly won territory". But Abad y Queipo, brilliant statistician, bishop of the Church, and keen analyst of his times, provides the most concise statement of that principle.

[1]Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 12.
[2]Hist. de la Iglesia de México—Cuevas. Vol. 2 p. 21.

We quote him to the letter:

"History shows that all modern monarchies have been founded upon these two entities: the nobility and the clergy; on the nobility . . . because it constituted the race of conquerors; on the clergy, because history reveals its important services in preserving the results of the conquests and in governing with peace and justice the subjugated peoples".

"It is evident, then, that the mutual relations between the throne, the clergy, and the nobility exist from the time when the monarchy is established, and they are the ties that bind into one indivisible whole *these entities*. The dignity of the clergy and the nobility emanates from the throne; but at the same time they assure the latter the subordination and obedience of the people. They are indispensable members of the monarchical constitution. 'Take away [quotes Abad y Queipo from Montesquieu] the prerogatives of the lords, the clergy and the nobility, and very soon you will have a popular government'."[1]

Nothing could be added that would further indicate the relation of the Church and the State in the colonial regime. Siamese twins could have hardly been more thoroughly joined; and no clearer exposition of this politico-religious oneness could be found than that which has been cited from the pen of one of the ablest defenders the Mexican Church has ever had.

§

The second of the four basic sources of Catholic power was, as has been indicated, its control of education. Its early activities in this realm have been described during the course of this study, and we have but to note some general characteristics of this monopoly, maintained throughout the Domination.

The study of history in the Church schools and colleges was nothing but an exact science of facts, dates, and authorities; reason, investigation and hypothesis had no part in the curriculum, and the highest virtue of the student was a capacious memory.

[1]México hacia fines del Virreynato—Quintero. p. 104.

The courses of study were limited to the latin of the Middle Ages, the canon law, the scholastic theology and the metaphysical polemics about grace, the universals, the nature of the Trinity, predestination and similar casuistical residues of sterile philosophies. What was called philosophy was simply a labyrinth of precepts on the nature of original matter, syllogistic forms and other abstractions borrowed from the Aristotelian system, and badly glossed by Arab commentators.

Lorenzo de Zavala, whose education was gleaned in these Church schools describes their internal discipline in a concise manner. He says, "The religious and pious exercises occupy a great portion of the students' time. But these pious acts have been reduced to a mere formal attendance at chapel, where they manifest their presence by the noise of their voices. No one pays any attention to the monotonous lengths of prayers. The attention is never fixed on the content, and, though we repeat a hundred times the customary formulas, nothing in them appeals to reason, to intelligence. In fact, we become accustomed to separate the thought from the words that are spoken".[1]

There was no such thing as political science. The names of Voltaire, Rousseau, and D'Alambert were regarded as symbols of monsters whose work was to tempt the just. Their works were strictly censored, the book merchants feared to carry them in stock for fear of certain ruin. The vigilance of the clergy on all written matter extended all the way from the printing shop in Spain to the desk of the student in the New World.

It has been shown that the Church absolutely refused to permit schools where it did not have a priest or a friar to supervise them. To the present, it has fought desperately to maintain its control on the young generation, knowing well that constitutional liberalism is ineffective where the conscience and the mind have been carefully molded since the tenderest years by the clergy.

§

The third fountain of vigor and vitality which in-

[1]Ensayo Histórico—Zavala. Vol. 2 p. 311.

fused power into the Church was the system of special privileges, called fueros, which it enjoyed. The practice had early been established of extending special consideration to the priesthood in the New World, transplanting all the abuses then prevalent in the European system.

There were two classes of fueros: military and ecclesiastical. It is with the latter that we are concerned and we shall speak of them briefly.

A fuero, then, was a privilege, a prerogative or an exemption.

The clergy enjoyed three classes of immunity; local, real and personal. Under these three heads exemption could be claimed for almost anything that was distasteful or injurious to the interests of the Church. The negative immunities were exemption from taxation or other forms of contribution, personal service, or public duties. The positive immunities consisted in the rights reserved exclusively for the clergy.

These reserved privileges were the right to trial by ecclesiastical courts and the proceedings incident thereto. Special courts, presided by clerical judges, ruled by canon law, heard and tried all cases in which a clergyman was in any way involved. Never was a priest compelled to appear before a civil court. The proceedings were secret, the verdict not subject to appeal, the court responsible to no one. These special tribunals became the bulwark of clerical libertinage, the mainstay of its temporal power. The common courts were a common joke and the only justice in the land was the ecclesiastical.

Naturally, this unlimited freedom degenerated into abuse. The fuero became an excuse for every excess, a palliative for every transgression. It created a class of untouchables, that is, a class elevated above the rest, that none of the means of social control or civic sanction could reach. Raised to such a high plane of exclusiveness, the clergy, breathing the pure air of special rights and fueros, could not withstand the corroding tendencies that soon were gnawing at its most vital organs.

"Without fueros the clergy cannot exist", said Abad y Queipo. "Without the clergy, the monarchy will

fall; therefore, fueros and still more fueros for the clergy".

The earliest reformers saw clearly that the heart of the matter lay in the existence of special rights. And the traditional defenders of conservatism have always rallied around the cry of "Religión y Fueros". Henry VIII had set an example that the Reform emulated in 1857, as we shall see further on.

§

We come now to the fourth and last point, the material wealth of the Church. The staunch apologist of the Church always sees red when it is affirmed that the Catholic hierarchy controlled the wealth of New Spain up to the early years of the last century.

Ignoring the mass of controversial material that has been hurled around this issue, we may go mainly on authentic documents for the present discussion.

It seems that from the earliest times the priests showed an unusual interest in accumulating the goods of this world. It need not be said that there were exceptions—but these were honorable exceptions and not the rule. The good friars who came to New Spain soon found their drab frock and their breviary extremely uninteresting and they began to lay up stores for their greater comfort and security.

In this they were not unobserved. The King of Spain wrote to the Bishop of Chiapas in 1582, commanding him to order inventories in all the churches of his dioces, making lists of the ornaments, chalices, cups, and all articles used in the services. "This I command [said Phillip II] *because we have been told that the monks of that land consider these things as their own property,* and that when they move to another church, they take them away, which causes loss and fraud to the natives who gave them".[1]

The practice had long been observed by the Spanish crown of giving grants of land, called "mercedes", to the Church. Authorization was also given to compel the natives to remain on this land, as on the encomiendas.

[1]Colección de documentos—García. Vol. 15 p. 223.

Here the convents and monasteries were erected, always regarded as the property of the Church. The representative value of these grants soon reached a fabulous sum.

So numerous did these grants become, that in 1644 the governing body of Mexico City, the Cabildo, took alarm and petitioned Phillip IV to prevent the foundation of new convents, alleging that "the goods which these have in their cloisters constitute one-half of the property of the nation". It also asked the suspension of ordination of priests as there were more than 6,000 in the land.[1]

In the constitutional regulations of the Provincial councils there appear some dispositions which are heavily burdened with an atmosphere of the material.

The Council of 1555 decreed that all testaments and wills should be complied with not later than one year after the death of the testator. The priests were obliged to keep a record of all who died during the year in their parishes. It went further. It commanded that "when a person dies his testament shall be given within nine days to one of our supervisors, or to the priest, who will enforce the dispositions of said testament within one year of the death of the testator.[2]

The same council decreed that if any person was excommunicated and permitted the ban to exist more than one year, his goods should be confiscated by the Church, and himself thrown into prison. Varying degrees of penalties were imposed for negligence, all of them stipulating that a large per cent should be paid to the treasury of the Church.[3]

What was the actual wealth of the Church at the end of the 18th century? Figures are available from many sources; the most reliable are presented here.

In 1797, a survey was made in Spain of the economic situation of the country "where the nation was composed almost entirely of beggars and convents". It was found that the total wealth of the realm was 1,900,000,000 reales, of which the Church owned 340,000,000, or 20 per cent of the total.

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[1]Hist. de México—León. p. 291.
[2]Concilios Provinciales. Ch. xi.
[3]Ibid.

This anomalous condition was duplicated in New Spain, with aggravations, if anything.

Baron von Humboldt estimated that in this epoch the wealth of the Church in Mexico ascended to 44,000,000 pesos in the so-called pious funds, and 3,000,000 pesos in real property. Abad y Queipo accepts these figures, from which it is logical to assume that they are conservative.

There were 157 missions in other lands supported by the Mexican Church. There were 1,073 curates, 264 convents, and innumerable churches in the country. The number of priests, monks, etc., amounted to 2,300; the 8,000 nuns, priests, prelates, and attendants received annually 12,000,000 pesos in rents and perquisites.

Following are the salaries received by some of the prelates of the Mexican Church (figures are pesos):

The Archbishop of Mexico	130,000 yearly
The Bishop of Puebla	110,000 yearly
The Bishop of Valladolid	100,000 yearly
The Bishop of Guadalajara	70,000 yearly
The Bishop of Durango	35,000 yearly
The Bishop of Monterey	30,000 yearly
The Bishop of Yucatán	20,000 yearly[1]

Twenty thousand pesos a year were starvation wages in those days for the head of a bishopric.

Don Lucas Alamán, champion par excellence of the Church, said this, "The wealth of the Church does not reside in the buildings that it possesses. It consists in the capital invested in mortgages on private enterprises, and the interest resulting therefrom. This situation made each chaplaincy or each religious chapter a sort of bank of credit". These writers agree that the Mexican Church owned or controlled between one-third and one-half of the national wealth.[2]

But figures, after all, offer admirable grounds for debate. What with the questioning of authority, doubt as to sources of information, etc., no complete argument can be closed by mere statistics.

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[1]These figures are taken from "México hacia fines de Virreynato"—Quintero. p. 115.

[2]La Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 16.

It is the testimony of the Church's own spokesman which furnished the most conclusive clue as to the actual financial power of the Church in 1800. A preliminary digression is necessary to put the facts in their historical setting.

It will be recalled that the Spanish crown had ordered a study of the wealth of the country in 1787, and that it was discovered that 20 per cent of this was in the hands of the Church. Now, it happened that the royal treasury was on the verge of bankruptcy, and the usual methods for getting funds had been exhausted. Someone suggested the original idea of confiscating the funds that the Church had loaned to private enterprises at interest. These so-called pious funds amounted to 44,000,000 pesos in Mexico alone.

Such was the origin of the famous decree of December 26, 1804, which commanded that all loans then extant of the pious funds should be called in and remitted to the treasury at Madrid.

Panic spread like a flash. The Church was on the eve of losing her wealth, her riches. What could be done?

Into the breach leaped Abad y Queipo, statistician supreme of the Church, and always an alert defender of her interests.

Abad y Queipo formulated his famous memorial to the king, asking the repeal of the decree.

But let the good bishop speak for himself:

"Your Majesty believed that agriculture, commerce and industry in New Spain are supported by private capital, entirely or in great part. The contrary is true. Out of 200,000 persons who manage these branches, there are not in New Spain 100 who manage their enterprises *with their own capital,* nor are there 10,000 who control one-third the capital invested."

Who, then, supplied the capital, if not the entrepreneur himself? Abad y Queipo gave the answer:

"There is not a concern or enterprise that has not begun without the aid of the permanent or common resources of the pious fund. The agriculturist, the mer-

chant, the mine owner, the small farmer, these and countless others depend entirely upon the sums of our pious fund.

"These 44,000,000 pesos are in the active hands of the agriculturists, the industrialists, the merchants; they constitute *more than two-thirds* of the productive capital of this realm".

"The merchant begins his enterprise with a small principal, increased by a loan from the pious fund; he whose crops were unsold on account of reverses, and faces the exigent creditor, conjures the tempest by a loan from the pious fund.

"Equal benefits have been received by the manufacturers, the artisans, the business men . . . the pious fund may be compared to a quiet but flooded river which irrigates and fertilizes an extensive land, spilling benefits wherever it flows".

But this is not all, we are told.

"Not only have private persons enjoyed such great benefits; the consular service, the university, the town government, the courts and tribunals have had no other money chest to defray expenses . . . than the ecclesiastical funds. Even the central and local governments have depended on that wealth to open new public works, for expenses of war, or to meet the salaries of civil employees and military officers, and for a hundred other objects of urgent necessity, avoiding thus the disturbance of good order and the public peace".[1]

Therefore, concluded Abad y Queipo, it is folly, nay, it is financial ruin to call in these loans. The whole economic structure would topple like a house of cards if the decree of December 26 were enforced. The whole point was, of course, that his Majesty would thus lose more in the long run.

Here, in masterly fashion, is revealed the economic power of the Church. From merchant prince to humble peddler, from army general to obscure foot soldier, from mayor of the town council to humble scrivener; the mine owner, the truck gardener, the druggist, the slave owner,

[1]La Cuestión Religiosa en México—Lugo. p. 21.

the merchant, the artisan, the judge and the professor; all dipped into that "quiet but flooded river", the pious fund, wherewith to water their own financial aridity. To call in these loans would have been to drain the economic body of its life blood, leaving it a pale corpse. And this life blood was the money of the Church loaned out at interest!

A fair appraisal can now be made of the riches of the Church. The impartial reader, the economist, the political scientist, will judge whether such a condition was healthy; whether a dogmatic, doctrinal hierarchy could control the very backbone of the nation's economic life, and not constitute a menace and a danger to untrammelled development in science, in industry, in liberty of thought and freedom of opinion, in social readjustment and in civic education.

§

To review, these four were the cornerstones of the temporal power of the Church: 1—the intimate alliance with the civil power; 2—the monopoly on the educational forces; 3—the enjoyment of special rights (fueros); and 4—her immense land interests, together with her exclusive control of the productive capital in industry and finance.

Such was the old order. It could not resist forever the impulse of modern thought; slowly, here and there, appeared signs of the attack that was taking form.

In 1717 the right of investiture had been wrested from the Holy See by the Spanish crown, and with it the control of the Church in the New World. In 1767 Charles III took measures that were generations ahead of his time. He ordered the expulsion of the Jesuits, restricted the jurisdiction of the Inquisition, reduced the number of churches which enjoyed the right of giving sanctuary, limited the Church censorship of printed matter, supervised the Church's financial activities and finally, in 1795, restricted the use of the ecclesiastical privilege of trial in church courts. To be sure the Church strained at every new measure; but it contented itself with courteous petitions; it never revolted.

Even the conservative Abad y Queipo was moved to suggest some reforms to counteract the pressure from without.

The outburst of revolutionary philosophy in France before and during the Revolution added its momentum to these early attempts at reform. New ideas trickled into New Spain despite the vigilance of censors, and the young leaders began to look askance at the existing order of things.

Rumblings of revolt were in the air. Anyone bearing a grudge against the Spanish rulers found welcome sympathy under the roofs of the conspirators. In the holocaust that was to unloose itself upon this virgin land, the Church was to play an important role.

§

The motives that lay back of the conquest of New Spain were principally two: material and spiritual conquest. Through these days of hardship and heroism stand in bold relief the figures of the priest and the soldier, arm in arm, joining the sword and the cross in an unconquerable alliance. Out of such beginnings arose two distinct powers, the civil and the ecclesiastical, each ambitious, each powerful, each with badly defined jurisdiction. Amid the clashes and the dissensions of these two influences, we see the inspiring conduct of many of the Church's sons, who carved their names in the hearts of the people by deeds of mercy and justice. When occasion demanded it the Church took a definite stand on the basic principles which governed that society, and it had to wage a continuous fight against the internal corruption and demoralization of its discipline. During three hundred years of Spanish domination it laid deep and lasting foundations, rooted itself solidly, molded its future irrevocably, and resting on that foundation waited the onslaught of growing liberalism, which proposed to enforce a new ideal, the Church to the contrary notwithstanding.

CHAPTER II

Revolution and Independence—1808–1821

The Revolutionary leaders, their aims, objectives and attitude towards the Church. Brief review of the military and political events up to 1821. Attitude of the higher clergy towards the rebellion—Part played by the clergy for and against independence. Reasons why the Church opposed independence. Iturbide and the conspirators of La Profesa. The Church changes front. The political situation in Europe—Napoleon and Ferdinand VII—The Spanish Constitution of 1812. Agustín de Iturbide—Conspiracy of La Profesa.

The War of Independence did not actually begin until the 15th of September, 1810, but conspiracies against the royal power had existed long before this. And in the first of these a clergyman played an important part.

During the last quarter of 1808 the royal courts in Mexico City commenced criminal proceedings against Fr. Melchor Talamantes Salvador y Baeza, on the charge of conspiring to separate the colony from Spain.

Fr. Talamantes was born in Lima in 1765, where he completed his preparation for the priesthood. He went to Mexico in 1799, joining the convent of La Merced.

Here his vast learning, his forensic ability and his independent spirit soon raised many enemies, who circulated all manner of gossip about him, not excepting the basest tales of immorality and worldliness.

In September, 1808, an insurrection, headed by Francisco Primo de Verdad, attempted to gain control of the government and to set up a monarchy independent of the Spanish throne. The intellectual leader of this was Fr. Talamantes, who had maintained a steady flow of eloquent propaganda for many years and who was looked upon as the father of the conspiracy. His writings in support of independence of the colony reveal an intellect of great accomplishments in the science of government, and a convincingness that was well-nigh irresistible.

The blow was untimely. A counter revolution by the Spanish merchants and royalists of Mexico City suffo-

cated the conspiracy. Primo de Verdad ended his days in the episcopal palace, where he was hanged; Fr. Talamantes, after suffering confiscation of all his papers and personal belongings, was imprisoned in San Juan de Ulúa in the port of Veracruz, to await the next ship for Spain. There he died in a short time, a victim of harsh treatment of his jailers, and of the terrible black vomit. Fr. Talamantes, cleric, is one of the first martyrs of Mexican independence.

It is not the purpose here to relate the military events that constituted the War of Independence. For present purposes it is sufficient to attempt an appraisal of the part played by the Church in that revolt, and to discover its official attitude towards the insurgents.

The War of Independence broke out on September 15, 1810, in the small parish of Dolores, State of Guanajuato. Its visible head was the priest Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla, who, in company with Aldama, Allende, and others, had been preparing the coup for some time. The discovery of the plot precipitated their plans; so, at dawn of that memorable day, the Cura Hidalgo tolled the bell of his small church and made known his plans to his parishioners, inviting them to revolt.

The warrior-priest soon collected a huge mob, the most ill-assorted liberating army of modern times. Armed with pikes, lances, rocks, slings, picks, blunderbusses, a few rusty cannon and even with sticks, the "army" swept everything in its path.

The war followed no plan of campaign. Anything that stood in the path of the insurgents on their way to the capital was razed to the ground. The capture of Celaya and Valladolid were furious riots where many non-combatants lost their lives through excesses of the undisciplined men under Hidalgo. From Valladolid Hidalgo directed his hosts towards Mexico City. At the Mount of the Crosses he met and defeated the hastily organized royalist force. That Hidalgo was not a soldier at heart was revealed by his next step. Instead of investing the unprotected capital, and thus ending the war within a few weeks after its beginning, he retired to

the west, giving the enemy the precious time needed for organizing the defense. From that time reverses began.

Hidalgo in turn was pursued to Guadalajara. Near that city was fought the disastrous battle of Puente de Calderón; the insurgent army was dispersed and Hidalgo himself was forced to flee north to Chihuahua. In that state, at a place called Acatita de Baján, he was surprised and taken prisoner by a royalist patrol. Trial by court martial followed; the Church degraded him, and shortly after he was beheaded. His head was sent to Valladolid in a cage, which was hung from the cornice of one of the buildings of that city.

With the death of Hildalgo, the leadership of the revolt passed into the hands of Jose María Morelos y Pavón, also a priest, and an ardent follower of Hidalgo. Morelos's personal courage was unsurpassed by any of his subordinates. His valor and intrepidity at the siege of Cuautla placed him head and shoulders above his contemporaries as a man of daring and fearlessness. For two years Morelos directed the struggle against the royalists who constantly increased in numbers.

But Morelos, like Hidalgo, committed a serious, a tragic, strategic error. He convoked the famous congress of Chilpancingo in 1813, which declared the independence of the Americas and framed a statement of policies for the incipient republic. It went further, however. It assumed the full direction of the war, giving Morelos only limited powers. The resulting diffusion of authority and command had immediate effects. The various rebellious units operating in the country lost all co-ordination; Morelos was handicapped at every turn by the congress; and the movement that had given such promise of success degenerated into an individual venture wherever there happened to be a rebel and a royalist. Morelos himself fell into royalist hands. Together with his entire staff he was court martialed and shot, previously suffering demotion of his priestly character by order of the archbishop.

From 1815, the War of Independence assumed the aspect of numerous guerrillas fighting independently and

chaotically against a well organized, well directed royalist army. To be sure, these days were filled with heroic deeds and sublime feats. A handful of insurgents here and there throwing themselves blindly on a royalist detachment, hand to hand combats, and untold sacrifices nourished the spirits of the rebels. The most heroic figures of the eleven year struggle are thrown into relief during the darkest hours of the war. Nicolás Bravo, Vicente Guerrero, Guadalupe Victoria, Galeana, Rosales, the Rayón brothers, Mier y Terán, Nuñez and Avila maintained a harassing guerrilla war in the remote sections of the land. But it was no longer a war. It was patriotism and devotion to a lost cause fighting in their last lair, with no prospects of victory and abundant ones of death and annihilation.

Suddenly the tables were turned. In 1821, Don Agustín de Iturbide, one of the most blood-thirsty enemies of independence, and an officer in the royalist army, marched out of the capital at the head of an imposing army, with instructions to annihilate Vicente Guerrero, who held his own in the mountains of Oaxaca, and who was recognized as the most dangerous of the insurgents. Iturbide's conduct, however, did not conform to his official orders. He marched south, but instead of annihilating Guerrero, he initiated negotiations, which culminated with the Plan of Iguala. Iturbide, by the terms of that plan or agreement, declared himself for independence. Joining forces with Guerrero, he doubled back on Mexico City and entered it on September 25, 1821, declaring the land to be independent of the mother country and the Spanish crown.

Thus began and thus ended the War of Mexican Independence, consummated at last by its bitterest enemies. To explain this bewildering contradiction it will be necessary now to return to the beginning of the war, studying the attitude of the Church towards the rebels, locating its causes, and showing the vital connection which existed between the political situation in Europe, the policy of the Church in Mexico, and the effects of both on probabilities of freedom for the colony.

It has been shown elsewhere that the Church considered itself as one of the two pillars upon which the monarchy reared itself. Consequent with this idea, the clergy always assumed an uncompromising and thoroughly bellicose attitude against any idea of independence, lending itself to the persecution of the first precursors of such a step.

As early as 1648, one Don Guillen de Lampart had formed an elaborate conspiracy to overthrow the Spanish yoke. Upon being discovered he was promptly shut up in the cells of the Inquisition, whence he soon escaped. He returned, however, to carry on a campaign of propaganda by means of handbills clandestinely circulated, directed in the main against the archbishop and the Inquisition. Caught once more, he was tried and burned as a heretic on the 19th of November, 1649.

When Fr. Talamantes and Primo de Verdad initiated the movement of 1808, they had no more implacable enemy than the clergy. The fellow-monks of Fr. Talamantes testified against him; his superiors heaped calumny and scandal upon him; the Church assisted feverishly in his persecution and prosecution. The brave Primo de Verdad met his violent end in the basement of the episcopal palace itself.

That was the traditional attitude and that was the ground that the hierarchy took at the outbreak of hostilities in 1810.

When Hidalgo began his improvised march against Mexico City on that September day, he carried as his flag and emblem an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, hoisted high on a pole. The religious fervor of his motly following was thus aroused to a high pitch, considering the Virgin from that time on as the patroness of their cause, and christening her "the Insurgent Virgin".

When news of the battle of the Mount of Crosses reached the viceroy, he held a hasty consultation with the civil and religious officials. It was decided that the royalist army, too, needed a saintly patroness. So, in double-quick time, a solemn procession was formed, led by the archbishop, to the sanctuary of the Virgin of los

Remedios just outside the city. The viceroy laid the baton of command at the altar of the virgin, naming her commander-in-chief of the royalist hosts.

From that time the royalists and the insurgents marched into battle with the royalist Virgin and the insurgent Virgin at the head of their respective wards, there being no record of a personal encounter between the two celestial vestals.

With great reason a 20th century Catholic bard sings of the Virgin of Guadalupe, "la que nos hizo libres, la que nos hizo hermanos" (she who made us free, who made us brothers). But the Church did not stop with pompous gesture.

The news of Hidalgo's insurrection had hardly reached Mexico City when the then bishop, the often cited Abad y Queipo, published a blistering manifesto against Hidalgo.

After citing the evils of any revolt from the examples of the French Revolution, and that of Santo Domingo, he said, "You must come out to do battle against that enemy, to protect the flock whose care is my chief duty, and I must use as my weapon truth and reason against deceit, and the terrible lightning ray of excommunication against evil and iniquity".

"In use of the authority vested in me as bishop, I declare and publish that the above cited D. Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla and his followers are disturbers of the public peace, seducers of the people, perjured wrongdoers who have incurred the excommunication of canon law. I therefore declare them excommunicated and prohibit that anyone give them comfort, assistance or shelter, under pain of the same punishment . . .

"And I further proclaim that if he does not appear before the tribunal of the Inquisition, he shall be prosecuted by hanging in effigy . . . so that all the faithful may know that the promoters of this sedition and independence are apostates of religion, against which, as well as against the sovereign Ferdinand VII, they have declared war".[1]

[1]Colección de Documentos—García. Vol. 9 p. 41.

Thus much for Abad y Queipo, a high power in the hierarchy at that time.

The Bishop of Guadalajara was no less eager to air his views on the rebellion. In October of 1810, he fulminated this anathema:

"That infernal insurrection . . . is subversive of good order and peace; it is violent, unjust, contrary to natural law, the holy law of God, and the fundamental laws of our realm and other codes. Those infamous apostates, reduced to a guerrilla of perverse and ignorant [persons], transgress against the natural law which proscribes any offense against the peaceful and innocent.

"We are convinced of the incalculable errors of the seditious ones, not only in the moral, sacred and religious, but also *in the political* and *the economic*".[1]

The head of the hierarchy at that time was Archbishop Lizana y Beaumont. Representing the highest expression of official clerical opinion, he made the following statement at the outbreak of the revolt:

"What malevolent spirit, what infernal fury attempts to arouse the tranquil spirit of the peaceful towns? I cannot but warn you against the danger that your souls are exposed to, and the ruin that threatens your persons, if you do not close your ears to the tumultuous voice that has arisen these days in the towns of Dolores and San Miguel el Grande . . . Some intractable persons, among whom, with pain in my soul, I hear is one, a priest, seem to be the principal authors of this rebellion. Miserable ones! Do not hope that my angels will follow in your wake, as did those who followed Lucifer . . . Your name will never again be heard in the land of God, except as an object of eternal anathema.

"I cannot help demonstrating to you that the project (of independence) is against the law and doctrine of Jesus Christ.

"Behold, the precursor of the Anti-Christ has appeared in our midst to be our perdition."

The good prelate, however, offered the olive branch.

"I will intercede with his Excellency the viceroy in

[1]Colección de Documentos—García. Vol. 9 p. 63.

your behalf, and I assure you that you will find him disposed to pardon you with all indulgence and equity; I will not omit any means of showing your docility and repentance. But," he thunders once more, "if you continue in your iniquitous ways, you will feel the vigors of justice.

"And you, my priests, erase with your pious zeal the blotch which a minister of the sanctuary has thrown upon our venerable brotherhood.

"God grant that in you and in all others the precious and rich jewel of peace be preserved."

Thus much for the visible head of the Mexican Catholic Church.

In brief, the act of rebellion stamped the insurgents as heretics and apostates, enemies of religion unto death. When Hidalgo and Morelos were tried for treason, they were first divested of their religious investiture, declared heretics by the Church, and turned over to the military court with no recommendations for clemency.

Hidalgo promptly answered these fulminations which fell from archiepiscopal lips in veritable showers.

The insurgent chief asserted that he had never separated himself from true Catholic religion; he revealed the contradictions of his accusers and said that "it is certain I would have never been accused of heresy if I had not dared to undertake the liberation of this realm . . . Those anathemas are hurled against us through no religious motive".

And he added, "Whence comes this new doctrine, that in order to be a good Catholic, one must be a subject of the Spanish tyrant? Wherefore do they use excommunication where the church law does not prescribe its use?"

When the rebels seized Valladolid, Hidalgo compelled the licentiate, Mariano Escandón y Llera, to lift the ban of excommunication and the interdict imposed by Abad y Queipo. When Hidalgo left the city, Llera recanted and once more proclaimed the spiritual ban against Hidalgo's hosts.

The lower clergy were thoroughly in sympathy with the royal cause.

In 1811, the prior of the convent of Santo Domingo contributed ten bells which were melted and cast into cannon.

The friars of the Apostolic College of Pachuca offered themselves to the Viceroy as propagandists, going about the countryside, preaching against the rebellion. Dr. Don Agustín Iglesias, priest of San Angel, offered his services and his goods in defense of the royal cause; in Oaxaca, the bishop, Jordán y Bergoza, rode about the city streets on a mule, preaching a crusade against the insurgents.

In Puebla, early in October, the clergy of that neighborhood assembled and adopted the following resolutions: "We adhere to the cause of the king, considering that we are angels of peace, and compelled by our oath of allegiance to Ferdinand VII . . . we must be the strongest columns to support the throne of our monarch, to whom we have sworn allegiance . . . we shall preach the same doctrine of obedience to our legitimate ruler; and we shall use all means at our command to direct public opinion; and that we shall immediately inform the central government if there are any persons in our neighborhood who sow the seeds of sedition".[1]

The cathedral chapter of Mexico City constantly axhorted all priests "not to permit it to be said that the Mexican clergy had participated in the insurrection. This we pray, that it may be to the eternal praise of our priesthood".[2]

Brother Pablo García, parish priest of Acambay, rendered the following report to the archbishop in 1811. "The rebel chiefs were informed by someone that General José de la Cruz (royalist), had asked us for a loan, and that we priests collected 300 pesos for him; that we had also given 700 pesos to the commandant, José Andrade, as a loan, and that when he last passed through Acambay, we also gave him 800 pesos" . . . "being informed also of the joy with which we received the troops of the king and how we sheltered the officers without cost to them, said rebel chiefs were exceedingly angered, say-

[1]Colección de Documentos—García. Vol. 9 p. 73.
[2]Ibid., p. 118.

ing that for them we had nothing; therefore, they would rob all religious persons".[1] Another priest wrote in 1816, "The insurgents are very irritated against me because we have given them nothing, not even having tolled the bells when they have entered the town". On the other hand, the church belfries fairly shook with paroxysms of joy when the royalists marched in.

The bishop of Oaxaca went a little further. He organized a body of militia, recruited entirely from the ranks of friars and monks. When Morelos approached Oaxaca, this martial body was nowhere in sight.

The congregation of ecclesiastics of St. Peter resolved unanimously and joyously "to concentrate its efforts on the confessional, on the pulpit and in private conversation to inspire and maintain in the faithful the horror for the diabolical plans of the sinful rebels".[2]

In 1817 the bishop of Puebla, D. Joaquin Pérez, wrote a letter in which he tried to prove by scriptural reference that the Constitution of 1814 was conducive to heresy, and that the independence of America was contrary to religion and to the will of God.

When the viceroy Venegas organized a body of police to patrol the capital, he found that the treasury could not supply the necessary funds. He addressed a courteous petition to the cathedral chapter, asking for a contribution of 4,000 pesos towards the expenses of this police unit, called the vigilance police. The chapter appended its note of compliance with the regret "that it was impossible to give more".

Although the clergy as a whole stood squarely against the revolution, there were numerous exceptions.

The militant leaders during the early days of the revolt were clergymen—Hidalgo and Morelos. Other clericals who distinguished themselves in behalf of the liberating cause were Mariano Matamoros, Fr. Torres, Fr. Servando y Mier, Fr. Izquierdo, Verduzo, Moreno and Cos. Fr. Servando y Mier had called down the ire of the Church upon himself by preaching a sermon in

[1]Colección de Documentos—García. Vol. 9 pp. 219-221.
[2]Ibid., p.37.

which he attempted to prove that the apparition of the Virgin Guadalupe on the hill of Tepeyac was a spurious tale.

One of the earliest contenders for freedom was Fr. Vicente María Velázquez who gathered around him a nucleus of young liberals, the most notable of whom was Lorenzo de Zavala. Fr. Velázquez preached such doctrines as the re-apportionment of lands for the Indians. He spent five years in San Juan de Ulúa, the state prison at Veracruz, for his revolutionary propaganda in Yucatán.

The Church apologists of later days have always made it clear that these wayward ministers were definitely out of the fold when they joined the rebel cause. Eyzaguirre wrote in 1863, "Some writers have maligned the Mexican clergy, calling it seditious and revolutionary. To comprehend the injustice of this, it is enough to remember that only the small number of 140 friars and priests took part in the revolutionary cause during the War of Independence, out of a total 6,000 individuals who made up the body of the priesthood at that time. We repeat that Morelos, Hilgalgo, Matamoros and the few other ecclesiastics who took part in this war, were an exception, and that the rest of the clergy maintained the attitude which befits the high calling of the Catholic priesthood".[1]

Enough has now been said to show clearly what the Church thought and did with respect to the movement of independence. The hierarchy was unalterably opposed to breaking away from the Spanish throne. It was the stronghold of royalism and dependence.

But why did the Church prosecute the rebel leaders, many of them priests, when these had given repeated instances of devotion to Catholic creed and dogma?

Hidalgo and Morelos always said mass before going into battle. Morelos insisted on making Catholicism the official and *only* religion of the land, at the congress of Chilpancingo. Victoria, Bravo, Guerrero, Bustamante and even Zavala himself never abjured their Catholic faith.

[1]Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzagnirre. Vol. 2 p. 353.

The Church preferred to ignore these proofs of constancy in the rebellious chieftans because to throw its support to them would be to give the political direction of the country to men who were too dangerously apt to try new theories of government and social control. It preferred to anathematize them and cast its lot with the royalist cause, being assured of perpetual enjoyment of its special rights and prerogatives.

The point is clear. On one hand, the insurgent clericals conceived their faith as compatible with the loftiest dreams of independence; the Church declared such dreams absolutely incompatible with its canon law, its tradition, its own doctrine, and even with the divine will of Jesus Christ.

Such was the issue until 1820. Suddenly Don Agustín de Iturbide ceased to slaughter insurgents, marched south, signed the plan of Iguala and returned to Mexico at the head of his conservative-clerical-royalist-insurgent troops to proclaim independence.

To understand this bewildering and seemingly anomalous action, a word must be said concerning the political situation in Europe.

The Napoleonic hordes had invaded Spain and had seated Joseph, brother of the Napoleon I, on the throne of the Spanish Bourbons. The famous interview at Bayonne and its disastrous consequences for Spain aroused a vigorous spirit of nationalism which took up arms against the invader everywhere.

Long before this the liberal ideas of the 18th century had been filtering into Spain from the north; and in the trying years of 1808 to 1820, these ideas took form in the doctrines preached by the warriors who everywhere opposed the rule of the Frenchman. The Cortes of Cádiz embodied much of this liberalism, giving expression to it in many decrees, as we shall see presently.

Already the Constitution of 1812 had been proclaimed in Spain. But it was enforced nowhere, so that the Church felt secure both in Spain and in the colonies.

In 1820, however, events assumed alarming proportions. Under the leadership of the patriots Riego and

Quiroga the liberals had massed an army of no mean proportions at Palmar del Puerto de Santa María. Its object was to enforce the Constitution of 1812 and the decrees of the Cortes of Cádiz. The liberal success in the peninsula spread consternation and surprise in New Spain, where the liberal element among the Spaniards disposed itself to decree liberal measures modelled on those of the Cortes.

The nature of those decrees spelled speedy ruin for the temporal power of the Church.

Among other things, these liberal decrees abolished the Inquisition (Feb. 22, 1820); renewed the law which expelled the Jesuits (August 17, 1820); reduced the number of convents, prohibited the building of new ones, and fostered the secularization of clericals (October 1, 1820); increased the freedom of the press (October 22, 1820); and ordered the foreign missionaries to turn over all their properties and possessions to native priests. The Spanish congress had furthermore ordered the confiscation of church properties and the abolition of ecclesiastical privileges.

On October 11 of the same memorable year the Cortes decreed that the Church could not own or control convents, monasteries, schools, hospitals, asylums or the like establishments, nor hold mortgages or rights over such, nor title thereto.[1] The success of liberalism in Spain meant a liberal constitution for the mother country and her dependencies. The enforcement of those sweeping decrees would be carried out equally in Madrid as in Lima and Mexico City. Dependence now became a synonym for liberalism. A radical step was imperative. The conservatives of the colony either remained subject to Spain, and resigned themselves to the worst, or they would break all bonds with the mother country and perpetuate the conservative regime on this side of the Atlantic.

The latter procedure involved an evident contradiction; it meant an about face on the question of independence; it implied joining hands with the insurgents upon

[1]Derecho Civil Mexicano—Pallares. p. 38.

whose heads the Church had rained excommunications and anathemas; it meant that independence was in the sight of the Church no longer an offense against God; it meant that freedom was no longer unjustified by the Scriptures. Consistency with the past policy and loss of rights, privileges and exemptions, or a break with that policy and a conservation of church fueros. That was the dilemma and the Church decided that consistency was indeed an intangible substance compared with special rights and worldly goods. It chose to strike for independence.

The policy once decided it was merely a matter of setting to work on the means of carrying it out.

The church of La Profesa, a Jesuit incubus of note, became by the irony of fate the cradle of Mexican independence. Within its sheltered walls there met regularly and mysteriously three individuals, Dr. Monteagudo, high prelate and influential in things ecclesiastical; Tirado, the ex-inquisitor, and one other by the name of Batallar. These three drew up the plan of campaign, which consisted of declaring that Ferdinand VII had been coerced into accepting the Constitution of 1812 and such acceptance was therefore fraudulent and null; and that, as a consequence, the governing power reverted to the inhabitants of New Spain, represented by a ruler of their choice. This was nothing more nor less than the plan which Fr. Talamantes had proposed in 1808, and for which the Church had prosecuted him. As a logical consequence, the colony ceased to be such, it could now dictate its own laws, ignore the liberals of Spain, and maintain intact the *status quo*.

The instrument chosen to put into effect this conspiracy was Don Agustín de Iturbide. In as much as it involved treason to the viceroy, Apodaca, some person in his intimate confidence must be seduced in order to allay all suspicion. Furthermore, it required courage and elasticity of conscience, not to mention an unconditional belief in the conservative cause. Iturbide possessed all these qualities and he gave himself as a willing instrument.

He left Mexico City at the head of a strong army, carrying in one pocket the official orders to bring back, dead or alive, the insurgent Guerrero, and in the other the plan that had been manufactured in La Profesa, which was to serve as a basis for an agreement with Guerrero.

After a few desultory skirmishes with Guerrero's troops Iturbide initiated the negotiations. At first Guerrero indignantly refused to parly, fearing foul play. Once convinced, however, that independence was actually obtainable if he acceded to Iturbide's proposals, he consented to negotiate. It must be remembered that independence was the dearest dream of this hardy patriot, who was willing to make any concession, take any course that would sever the chains that bound the new world to the old.

Out of these agreements emerged the famous Plan de Iguala, signed and promulgated on the 2nd of March, 1821, at the little town from which it takes its name. The principal points of the plan were:

1. The Roman Apostolic Catholic religion, the only religion of the country, with no tolerance for any other.
2. The absolute independence of the realm.
3. The government to be a limited monarchy, with a constitution adapted to the country.
4. The calling of Ferdinand VII to the Mexican throne, or in case of his refusal, some other Catholic prince.
5. The clergy to retain all its privileges and "fueros".
6. The formation of a Council of Regency.
7. The union of all the component parts of the realm.

Union, independence and religion were the three guaranties of the new government. The Church once more postponed the reckoning; it alone could find the port when other institutions were being wrecked by the furious winds of 18th century liberalism.

When the forces of the coalition entered Guadalajara Fr. Dr. San Martin said in a sermon, "The present

war is a war for religion. Each one of us must be a soldier in this holy cause—the regular as well as the secular clergy, the aristocrat and the plebeian, the rich and the poor, all must throw the rifle to the shoulder and march . . . to fight and die if necessary for our honor and our religion. God save the American Church, and the army which protects our Church''.[1]

On September 27, 1821, the army of the Three Guaranties marched into the capital. Mexico was independent, but she was not yet free.

[1]El Pueblo Mexicano—Lara, p. 60.

CHAPTER III

Freedom and Chaos—1821–1856

Birth of Mexico's two traditional political parties. Leaders of this period: Iturbide. Bustamante, Santa-Anna, Gómez Farías, Comonfort, Juan Alvarez. Condition of the country: industry, commerce, finance. War with Texas. War with the United States—Attitude of the clergy during the war with the north. Revolution of Ayutla—Fall of Santa-Anna—the liberal reaction. Comonfort assumes the presidency—Juárez—First measures of the liberal cabinet. The religious struggle in other Latin republics at the middle of the 19th century—the question of patronage. Centralism and federalism.

The period of Mexican history which follows is chiefly characterized by chaos and confusion in the administration of government. It was a period of intense personalism in politics, of complete demoralization in public life, or unprincipled militarism and of brazen immorality in all the branches of social control. There was a constant clash of passions in which the operation of principles was suffocated. Men gathered around an individual, a motto, a fetish, but never around a well-defined ideal of political and social action. There was not a single man throughout this period with vision enough, with sufficient personality, with the colossal quantity of dynamic energy required by the times, to sound the depths of the national moral collapse and to give the country a revelation of its redemption.

Notwithstanding this absence of co-ordination, there sprang up two types of political thought which were from the first designated as liberal and conservative. It should not be assumed, however, that two parties in the strict meaning of the term came into being. Both knew what they wanted—the public power, but neither had a program which contained in precise and clear terminology concrete aims and means to attain them. Men conveniently changed from conservatism to liberalism or vice versa from one day to another. No public personality was unequivocal, unchanging or consistent in his profession of faith. At any rate, the germ of political unity was present in this bedlam, and slowly but surely

the passing of the years brought that crystalization and the delineation of camps which was the only remedy for such confusion.

The conservatives, generally speaking, were those of the upper class, who, having material possessions or special privileges of some sort, threw their support on anyone who was opposed to experimentation with the new political theories. The rich, the clergy, and the militarist were thus thrown into close alliance. The liberals, on the other hand, were that heterogenous mass of havenots who were moved by every conceivable motive of religious, race, caste, professional, agrarian, or social ambition. Their leaders were men of vague notions about democracy, vaguer ideas about public administration and practically nebulous experience in the problems of state. Organization, such as it was, dwelt entirely in the mansions of the conservatives, and that chiefly because the conservation of the "fueros" or special rights gave the clergy and the militarists so much in common.

The story of this period is an absorbing study in the slow but steady progress that liberalism made at the expense of conservative organization.

The clergy had really found itself at the end of the War of Independence in excellent condition. The plan of Iguala assured the completest realization of its dearest dreams, and the material wealth of the Church left no doubt as to who controlled the corrupt politicians who scaled the public power.

During the Domination, the Mexican Church had been subordinated to the Spanish crown by reason of the existence of the right of investiture possessed by the kings. When the country became independent, the Church became supreme. It refused, as we shall presently see, to recognize the right of investure in the republican government of the country. But it went further: it insisted on the protection and conservation of its special rights and its properties; that it should be permitted to intervene in all civil contracts; that public education continue to be under the exclusive direction of the hierarchy; that no other religion be permitted in the

country; and that the civil authorities lend their material power to enforce the payment of tithes and the observance of monastic vows. Gregory XII in his balmiest days could not have imagined or desired more.

The question of investiture was one of the first issues between conservatism and liberalism. The republican leaders claimed that the right of investiture had passed legally into the hands of the Mexican government from those of the Spanish kings. "The government maintains," they said, "its rights of investiture; the sovereign people of America succeeded the Spanish kings in the functions of government; consequently, they also succeeded in the exercise of this right".[1]

On the 11th of March, 1822, an assembly of prelates held in Mexico City resolved: "That with the consummation of the independence of this Empire [Iturbide was then emperor] the right of investiture which the Holy See had granted ceased; that in order to continue it as valid, a renewal of such grace from the Holy See must be awaited; and that in the meantime the provision of ecclesiastical posts is exclusively the right of the hierarchial authorities".[2]

Such was the foundation of the state within the state that has ever since challenged liberal thought. The Church beckoned its opponents into open combat.

The first point of issue, then, was that of investure. But there soon appeared another. Traditionally the clerical party has always stood for a centralized government in the political organization of the country. This for obvious reasons that need no exposition here. The republicans immediately pronounced themselves in favor of a federal republic, modelled after that of the United States. Point of conflict number two. Hereafter, the Church maintained a sordid opposition to all federalists, and threw its whole-hearted support to the centralists like Santa-Anna, who were by that very fact, dictators at heart.

The first ruler of the independent country was Agustín de Iturbide. After a brief government by a

[1]Cuestión Religiosa en México—Lugo. p. 19.
[2]Ibid., p. 18.

Council of Regency, he had himself acclaimed Emperor Agustín I by a mob of drunken soldiers. Iturbide's eleven-months empire was a complete failure. His own ineptitude, coupled with the opposition of the republicans, compelled him to leave Mexico as an exile. A year later, returning secretly at the instance of friends, he was identified by a republican army officer and summarily executed at Padilla, Tamaulipas.

Guadalupe Victoria became the first president of the embryonic republic. His qualities as an administrator were in no way parallel to his abilities as a warrior. Around him milled the passions of opposing interests, ignoring him sometimes, or making him an innocent and willing tool. Under him was promulgated the Constitution of 1824, which, on the whole, was a conservative triumph.

To be sure, this document stipulated that the form of government would be a federal republic; but the clerical-conservatives soon found that this was an empty precept. The country was, by tradition and by circumstances, centrally organized. It continues so to this day, despite the theories of the Constitution of 1917. In reality, this was an ephimeral liberal victory.

On the other hand, the Church gained some very definite advantages by that constitution. Article 3 stipulated that "the religion of the Mexican nation is and will always be the Roman Catholic. The nation will protect it by just and wise laws, and prohibits the existence of any other". Elsewhere it sanctioned and continued the special privileges of the clergy and the army.

No more convincing proof can be adduced to show the weakness and disorganization of the liberal group. With the control of wealth and of the army in the hands of the conservatives, they could not help but accede to the demands of the Church. For the present, they would have to do with the crumbs; later, perhaps, they could get the whole loaf.

At this time, there were two states of the country which came to the forefront in the matter of religious reforms. In Yucatán the priest Fr. Velázquez had dis-

seminated liberal propaganda as early as 1812. His influence upon a circle of young enthusiasts bore fruit in 1824, when the legislature of that state suppressed the Franciscan convents, the only ones existing in that region; the monks who refused to abandon monastic life were compelled to live in one monastery, supported by public charity.

The State of Jalisco adopted in the same year its first constitution. Art. 7 of this document raised a storm of protest from conservative centers, as it provided that the state treasury would determine and pay the salaries of priests, eliminating thus all tithes, contributions, etc.

Early in 1827 occurred the notorious conspiracy headed by a priest, one Fr. Joaquín Arenas. Fr. Arenas represented a strong nucleus of plotters who were anxious to unseat Victoria and initiate a period of monarchy or dictatorship. The priest was appointed to approach the commandant of the garrison of the capital, General Ignacio Moya. Moya was addressed in the following manner:

"The sad state in which the Christian religion finds itself in a faithful Catholic country, as was Mexico under the sweet domination of Spain, and the utter ruin which threatens the faith of our fathers by the creation of new forms of government, the freedom of the press, and the unrestricted entrance into the country of heretical books; all these things must move any soldier of honorable and meritorious service to enter into the plan that has been formed with the aim of re-establishing Spanish rule".[1]

General Moya immediately communicated with the president, revealing the existence of the plot. Fr. Arenas was trapped, summarily tried and executed for treason.

Meanwhile, efforts were being made to arrive at an agreement with the Pope to solve the problem of investiture. The Mexican government sent Dr. Don Francisco Pablo Velázquez to the Holy See, with instructions to formulate a concordat such as had been granted in other countries. Dr. Velázquez spent several months waiting

[1]Cuestión Religiosa en México—Lugo. p. 183.

upon His Holiness, who steadily refused to see him. His patience exhausted, the emissary finally asked for his passports, terminating his trip with a complete failure. The Pope not only refused to consider a concordat, but he wrote a Bull to the Mexican clergy, urging them to strive for a restoration of Spanish rule.

The general disorganization of society did not imply that the Church was losing any ground with respect to the four basic sources of its power. Its special privileges were safeguarded by the Constitution of 1824. The Church and the State were still one and inseparable. As to education its control was as secure as ever. Zavala describes the condition of public education in 1828. He says, "All the literary and educational institutions of the country, with the exception of the school of mines and the university, are under the direct control of the Church. There are the seminaries, located in the principal cities, in which the curriculum consists of latin, theology and church history".[1]

The numerical strength of the clergy had decreased to 3,400 by 1829. Not so, however, the landed property of the Church. In that year there were 78 Franciscan, 25 Dominican, 21 Agustinian and 16 Carmelite monasteries and 19 belonging to the Brothers of la Merced.

Besides these, there were six important apostolic colleges and 64 convents; total: 214 convents and monasteries, which alone represented no less than one-twentieth of the national wealth.

Vicente Guerrero had succeeded Victoria to the presidency, assisted greatly by the bloody revolt known as la Acordada, which drove out Pedraza, who had polled the majority of votes. Guerrero governed only eight months, having been unseated by Anastasio Bustamante, vice-president under Guerrero.

Bustamante was purely and simply a conservative-clerical tool. The discontent with Guerrero, fanned by the reactionaries, was based on the charge that "he had tried to govern with the people, when the people were ignorant and inept". Guerrero's incipient experiment in

[1]Ensayo Histórico—Zavala. Vol. 2 p. 10.

democratic practices spelt eventual ruin for the old order, so his fall was decreed.

The vice-president, Bustamante, left Mexico City surreptitiously and organized his coup at Jalapa, Veracruz. Thence he marched to the capital. Guerrero, unable to resist the attack, fled to his native mountains of the south, where he maintained a small and ineffective resistance.

Bustamante entered the city and proclaimed himself president. He caused the national congress to adopt a decree declaring Guerrero incapable of governing. He appointed Lucas Alamán as secretary of foreign relations and made dispositions to lay the foundations of a dictatorship.

Lucas Alamán is the defender of the Church in Mexico par excellence. He championed its cause at all times, not even stopping at cold murder to eliminate its opponents. His was "the black brain" which manipulated the conspiracy and betrayal that brought Guerrero into the hands of the conservatives, by whom he was executed. Alamán saw clearly that in as much as the country was condemned to be ruled by military adventurers like Bustamante and Santa-Anna, it behooved the clerical party to maintain cordial relations with the military caste, for mutual benefit. He was the power behind Bustamante, without whose consent nothing could be done.

The spurious president immediately set about to wreck what Guerrero had accomplished. He abolished the federal system and instituted complete centralization. He gathered around him men who were absolutely uncompromising on the question of clerical privileges. He did everything that would in any way hamper the effectiveness of liberal organization.

Bustamante went a bit too far. On every hand, in Sonora, Sinaloa, Jalisco, Nuevo León, and Zacatecas, men flew to arms. And, what was fatal, his personal popularity and prestige rapidly declined. It became obvious that he had outlived his usefulness to the conservative party, and his doom was sealed. All eyes were turned on Antonio López de Santa-Anna, the ruin of the nation personified.

Santa-Anna was a soldier of fortune who conveniently accommodated himself to circumstances when he could profit most. He had offered his sword to Iturbide when the latter, as emperor, desired the dissolution of the first national congress. Later he figured prominently in the movement that overthrew Guerrero, as Bustamante's right hand man. Now he stepped forth as the Nemesis of the man he had helped to raise. Santa-Anna, as subsequent events will reveal, never was anything but the most servile, the most abject and the most malleable tool the clergy ever had.

With surprising rapidity the revolt led by Santa-Anna swept Bustamante out of the presidency. Valentín Gómez Farías succeeded him as vice-president. The fact that such a rank liberal was permitted to gain the vice-presidency was due to the necessity of pleasing the liberals who had fought under Santa-Ana to restore the federation which Bustamante had abolished. The important, the vital, necessity for the Church was to have in the presidential chair a loyal and unconditional conservative. This explains why the clericals, who were avowed enemies of federalism, used it as a pretext to overthrow the now unpopular Bustamante.

One interesting incident must be noted here. When Santa-Anna was pressing towards the capital Bustamante found himself sadly out of funds. He instructed his secretary of the treasury, Sr. Rafael Mangino, to address a special appeal to the state governors, and to the cathedral chapters, ecclesiastical authorities and venerable clergy to make *extraordinary* and *special* efforts to give him assistance in such trying circumstances.[1] Evidently these persons had been in the habit of making *ordinary* and *usual* efforts to support Bustamante.

Once president of the country, Santa-Anna began a very odd and queer policy. He would retire to his country property, the famous hacienda Manga de Clavo, leaving the direction of affairs to his liberal subordinate, Gómez Farías. These periodic retirements were covered by the pretext of ill health or recuperation from the fa-

[1]Ensayo Histórico—Zavala. Vol. 2 p. 241.

tigue of campaigns; but in reality they were nothing more than a subterfuge to give the liberals enough rope wherewith to hang themselves. At all costs, the personal reputation of Santa-Anna had to be kept intact, that he might step in majestically to save the nation from the chaos of liberal administration.

It was during one of these vacations that Gómez Farías attempted the first reform on a large scale. Santa-Anna had retired early in 1832 to his hacienda, leaving Gómez Farías, as president pro-tem.

Gómez Farías, as has been said, became vice-president by virtue of a compromise with the liberals who had helped to eliminate Bustamante. While Santa-Anna was acting president, he naturally could not initiate any reformatory measures; but in 1833 and 1834, while substituting the recluse of Manga de Clavo, he put through the most radical legislation known up to that time.

Briefly speaking, his most important laws were:

1. The establishment of the right of investiture in the state which, as has been seen, met such bitter opposition in 1822.

2. The suppression of civil action to enforce the payment of tithes, other contributions to the Church, and the observance of monastic vows.

3. The separation of the clergy from the control of public education, and the closing of the national university.

4. Nationalization of the fifteen millions of pesos in real property owned by the Church.

Each of these was a mortal blow at the Church. They represented, as Lucas Alamán said, "three kinds of attack against its discipline and its institutions. First, an attack against the jurisdiction of the Church, providing that ecclesiastical prebends be assigned by the civil authorities as under the Spanish rule; second, an attack against its rents and possessions, pretending to leave the payment of tithes to the conscience of the donor; and third, against the monastic orders, suppressing the use of civil authority to enforce the obligations of religious vows, and declaring all monks and nuns were free to

abandon the religious life if they so chose''.[1] The same author adds, ''The greatest blow against religion was the complete exclusion of the clergy from public instruction. The government fixed the new plan of studies, suppressed the university, and placed every college in the land under its direct supervision''.

The example set by Gómez Farías in national legislation was immediately followed by Lorenzo de Zavala, the governor of the State of Mexico. In this same year, 1883, he put through a law compelling the subdivision of the extensive church properties in that state. These small tracts were to be rented to families at 5 per cent of their value, the proceeds to be used for the construction of public highways. Another law prohibited the immigration of clericals into the State of Mexico from other states in the union.

On June 23, 1833, Gómez Farías promulgated the famous ''Ley del Caso'', which provided for the expulsion of Spanish priests. Under this law and that of June 8th, the executive was granted unlimited powers in the regulation of public religious worship and the expulsion of ''undesirable'' foreign clericals.

The opposition cleared for action immediately. A hail of pronunciamentos, plans, and manifestos rained on the liberal president, presaging his speedy fall. To grasp the motives and the source of these revolts, it will be worthwhile to study some of the plans briefly.

One General Arista was the first to raise the hue and cry in May, 1833. His famous plan included the following statements:

''The injustice of the attack that the faith of our fathers has suffered at the hands of the false philosophers who have entered the government compels every loyal Mexican to rush to the aid of his country . . . A fundamental faith is the basis of our religion, and instead of protecting it and keeping it free of impurities and falsities, the government robs it of its property, deprives its ministers of their sustenance and provokes popular belief in false philosophers.

[1]Historia de Mexico—Alamán. Vol. 5 p. 860.

"The present administration has declared itself against religion and the army. I therefore propose the following plan:

"1. The army will protect and defend the religion of our fathers, keeping it intact, and will perpetuate the fueros, privileges and prerogatives of the secular and regular clergy, as well as all its properties.

"2. General Antonio López de Santa-Anna is proclaimed supreme dictator, that he may remedy the ills of the nation.

"3. The army will preserve all its special rights and privileges".[1]

In the State of Morelia the subaltern, Escalada, abetted by Arista and Durán, led the revolt under the battle cry of "Religión y Fueros", which soon became the motto of all the numerous bands scattered throughout the country.

The plan of Cuernavaca, proclaimed on May 25, 1843, provided:

1. That the opinion and will of the nation is openly opposed to laws and decrees that have been promulgated in religious reforms, the toleration of Masonic sects and the proscription of persons.

2. That all such laws are declared null and void.

3. That the nation appeals to his Excellency Don Antonio López de Santa-Anna, to protect the just and lawful order which preceded the present regime.

The plan of Oaxaca, which preceded that of Cuernavaca by two days, contained the following:

"Long live the union, religion, and General Santa-Anna! *It is agreed*

"1. That the signers of this plan adhere to the purpose of maintaining the Roman Catholic Apostolic Religion and the present Constitution.

"2. That the heroic General Santa-Anna be proclaimed the champion of religion and of the national liberties.

"3. That all public officials who oppose the present plan are declared without lawful jurisdiction.

[1]Memorias—Bocanegra. Vol. 2 p. 480.

"4. That a humble and respectful petition be presented to his Excellency General Santa-Anna, begging him to lead us once more, saving us from irreligion as he has so many times saved us from despotism".[1]

Other plans were published at Jalapa, May 15; at Toluca, May 29; at Orizaba, May 19; and at Puebla, May 11, 1834.

Two obscure priests of the village Ecatzingo were seized by the fever of manifestos. Between them they concocted the farsical plan that bears the name of the town. It was a comic mixture of ultra-reactionary conservatism and the grossest kind of radical atavism. It provided that the country should be ruled by an Aztec emperor, chosen from twelve youths selected from the various Indian tribes. This new Moctezuma was to choose his consort from a bevy of beautiful white girls, thus establishing a dynasty which would forever unite the two races. The derision that greeted this pseudo-charter forced its authors into retirement.

These were the most important manifestos that came clustered around the cry of "Religión y Fueros". It will be seen that they succeeded each other with startling rapidity, evidently the result of a well-organized and centrally-controlled plan of attack. The uniformity of their contents could not result from pure coincidence; and they all insisted, with emphatic consistency, that Santa-Anna be returned to the supreme command of the nation as dictator.

In the meantime, Gómez Farías had discovered to his chagrin that the liberal forces were unprepared to sustain the enforcement of his progressive legislation. The wave of armed opposition swept the country, and he was compelled not only to leave his post, but to seek refuge in exile.

His efforts at reform had no practical effect on the laws of the country. They were not enforced during his presidency and they were repealed immediately after it. But Gómez Farías is the first to begin the work of crystallizing liberal opinion into concrete form. He gave the

[1]Memorias—Bocanegra. Vol. 2 p. 480.

liberal cause the first outline of what was to be its traditional program. He sounded the sickness of the nation and provided his followers with a slogan and a standard, just as the conservatices had rallied around "Religión y Fueros." With Gómez Farías comes the first demarcation of political camps with any degree of clarity: the liberals or "puros," the conservatives and the moderates, Valentín Gómez Farías was the prophet that prepared the way for him who was to proclaim the evangel of libertarian reform, Benito Juárez.

In September, 1835, Santa-Anna became dictator of Mexico. His advent was greeted noisily by the clerical-conservatives, with paens of joy and ringing of bells. The archbishop of Mexico, in his sermon of welcome, said, "A thousand times blessed be the man who has with such an expert hand returned to the Lord His legitimate heritage. Towards the end of last April God set in the heavens a beautiful star . . . whose brilliance proclaimed the coming of the justice and peace. This star was the arrival of his Excellency the honorable President General Don Antonio López de Santa-Anna in Mexico City, coming to reassume the leadership of our republic; the religious and patriotic sentiments of our people will forever proclaim him as a hero worthy of the love and admiration of the entire American nation".

Naturally, these sayings found favor in the ears of the dictator; they were the public expression of an alliance that would continue, as in the past, to work hand in glove. Santa-Anna was furthermore "offered" 40,000 pesos as a monthly "aid" by the clergy, in recognition of his services to the Church, and as testimony of their continued faith in him. This *"voluntary loan"* was gladly accepted, coming as it did, in the words of the charlatan himself, "from some pious institutions and ecclesiastical corporations". As long as the thirty coins were punctually paid, Santa-Anna remained a faithful son and defender of the Church.

Once more in the saddle, Santa-Anna put into motion the policies of traditional conservatism. He called an assembly which met in the episcopal palace at Tacubaya

late in 1835. This assembly constituted itself into a constituent congress and reformed the Magna Charta of 1824, eliminating the execrable traces which Gómez Farías had left, and re-enforcing the bulwarks of religion, intolerance and special rights. Federalism was eliminated and centralization instituted. The famous seven laws were born of this reformed constitution; they included such things as the organization of a supreme conservative governing power; the dependence of the several administrative branches on the executive; and the elimination of any material trend towards federalism. The dictatorship was now legally buttressed.

Then came the war with Texas, an inevitable clash in many ways, given the antecedents which brought it about, principally by the political situation in the United States, which tended to find its equilibrium in many ways in a war with the southern neighbor. This war did not come until 1847, but the Texas conflict was its first chapter.

The pompous Santa-Anna left for the north with all the circumstances required by his vain nature to meet the foe. After the disaster of San Jacinto he gave the most conclusive proof of his cowardice when he dictated the orders of retreat and later of armistice to the next in command of the Mexican forces, General Filisola, when threatened by General Houston with execution if he refused. Logically speaking, Santa-Anna was a prisoner of war and thus deprived of all command. Filisola should not have obeyed him. After this conduct the ex-dictator was guest of President Jackson at the White House, later returning to Mexico and retiring to Manga de Clavo.

Santa-Anna having retired in disgrace, it became necessary to elect another president. Three candidates were put forth; Anastasio Bustamante, Lucas Alamán and Nicolás Bravo. Any one of the three was persona grata to the Church. Bustamante had already done his bit in 1830. Alamán glorified the Church in song and story. Bravo had long since abandoned the liberal camp and had abetted conservative revolts. Bustamante tri-

umphed, continuing the policies of Santa-Anna in centralizing the government, protecting the Church, and laying the foundations for a lasting dictatorship. Santa-Anna remained in retirement at Manga de Clavo, nursing his injured pride and his amputated stump. Bustamante alternated the presidency with Bravo until 1846.

In this year Gómez Farías once more assumed the presidency, having to direct immediately the war that had broken out with the United States.

We are principally concerned here with the attitude of the clergy during the war, not with its causes and motives.

This war, which was purely and simply one of aggression and conquest, came at a time when Mexico was completely disorganized in every phase of national life. Many states failed to contribute in any way towards the carrying on of the war, refusing arms, money and men. The conservatives, feeling the growing pressure of liberal strength, were not at all adverse to a foreign war to strengthen their domestic position, though it would result in territorial loss to the nation. The industries of the country had been destroyed since the earliest days of the War of Independence, and the incessant revolts since that time had kept all development in check. The governments lived by onerous loans contracted in European financial centers, continually burdening the national treasury with accumulating interests. The war reduced itself on the part of Mexico to a series of isolated instances of personal heroism; but there was no opposition, no defense; there could be none.

Gómez Farías soon discovered that the treasury was absolutely exhausted and that funds for carrying on the war were a vital necessity. On the 11th of January he issued a decree authorizing the sale of church properties up to the sum of 15,000,000 pesos, in order to furnish the necessary funds. Gómez signed his own death warrant with that decree. The Church positively refused to submit, declaring that it would never suffer such "attacks" on any of its possessions, or personnel, in favor of the nation or of individuals. Previously, Farías had

asked the Church for a loan out of its great resources of the pious funds. This the Church had refused.

It was not only necessary to refuse the petition of the president, but for the safety of the Church it was necessary that he should go. This was affected in this manner.

There was, at that time, a regiment of militia in the capital composed entirely of the scions of the wealthy families and of social leaders. They had been nicknamed the "polkos" from their noted attachment to the popular dance of that day, the polka. This regiment of "polkos" was ordered to Veracruz to assist in the defense of that city against the American corps under General Winfield Scott. The polkos left the capital, but returned within a few hours to overthrow Gómez Farías. The traitors re-entered Mexico City amid the cheers of the aristocracy, who hailed them as the defenders of religion. The government was compelled to repeal its decree under the pressure of bayonets paid by the wealth that had not been available to defend the country against the invader, while Scott's cannon reduced Veracruz to a heap of ruins. General Scott, after taking Veracruz, addressed a proclamation to the Mexican people, in which he stated that "the Americans are your friends, not your enemies; we are friends of the peaceful inhabitants of this nation, friends of your holy religion and of its ministers". He assured the people that the Catholic Church was firmly established in the northern republic and that it was respected and revered by the laws of that government.

The 15th of May, 1847, the American forces entered Puebla; the bishop of that city, Don Pablo Vázquez, had assured Scott that there would be no resistance, praying at the same time that ecclesiastical persons and properties might be respected.

General Scott was cordially received by Bishop Vázquez. A courteous exchange of social calls, a special body guard of American soldiers for his eminence, promised very agreeable relations between the two personages. On one occasion, some priests compelled a number of native worshippers to cede their places in the cathe-

dral while mass was being said, to a handful of soldiers who had been invited to attend the service.[1]

The holy men of Puebla and elsewhere were oblivious to the tragedy that engulfed the nation. The invader was the guest of honor at their sumptuous palaces, the welcome participant at their laden banquet table.

The end of the war left Mexico more firmly controlled by conservatives. In June, 1851, Mariano Arista, a moderate liberal, attempted to initiate luke-warm reforms, but he was promptly squelched by the revolution called the "Plan del Hospicio", begun in Guadalajara. By January of 1853, Arista was down and out, and Santa-Anna was called from exile.

Don Lucas Alamán wrote the letter that called Santa-Anna back to Mexico. In this interesting document, Alamán expounds the reasons for such a step. He tells Santa-Anna that his accession to the presidency is assured, that it will simply be the prologue to a monarchy which the conservatives had long dreamed of; that it would be to the exclusive benefit of the clergy and the army, not to speak of the monied class.

The letter, dated March 23, 1852, had the desired effect. Santa-Anna hobbled back to his native country and was "elected" president. His last farce had begun.

He immediately suppressed the freedom of the press; he sent emissaries to Europe in search of a foreign protection; he established himself indefinitely as supreme dictator; he founded the Order of Guadalupe and crowned himself grand master of it. His official title was thenceforth "Alteza Serenísima" or, freely translating, "Most Serene Highness".

The situation became intolerable. In March, 1854, came the outburst that shook conservative power to its foundations. The old-time liberal patriot, Juan Alvarez, declared himself in revolt at Ayutla, Oaxaca, seconded by Ignacio Comonfort. Santa-Anna left the capital at the head of his troops to do battle, but returned with no reward for his pains. Attempting to whitewash his position, he ordered a plebiscite to choose candidates for the

[1]Historia de México—León. p. 449.

presidency; but some of the voters cast their ballots for the rebellious Juan Alvarez, whereat Santa-Anna issued this order: "With surprise and indignation His Most Serene Highness has seen that some recalcitrant individuals, boasting of anarquistic ideas, have voted for the rebel Juan Alvarez for president of the nation. In view of this, His Most Serene Highness orders that all those who thus voted be arrested and tried as conspirators, in as much as they have shown their sympathy for the revolt. God and Liberty. Mexico. December 11, 1854. —Blanco, Minister of War".[1]

The die was cast. Alvarez and Comonfort swept Santa-Anna and the clericals out of power. The time of reckoning was near at hand; right and left the energetic liberals substituted men of advanced ideas for the puppets of the clergy. Alvarez himself became president; he appointed to his cabinet Benito Juárez, as minister of justice; Melchor Ocampo, Guillermo Prieto, Ignacio Comonfort and Miguel Arroja.

This cabinet lasted a few short days. Don Melchor Ocampo, liberal *pursang,* insisted on the complete enforcement of reform measures; Ignacio Comonfort was in favor of moderation and compromise. Both presented their resignations, Ocampo's being accepted. Comonfort remained in the cabinet.

Ocampo, however, had not been the only ardent reformist in the cabinet. More profoundly convinced of the necessity of reform without compromise was Don Benito Juárez, pure blooded Zapotec Indian from Oaxaca, a man of great learning, of obdurate will power and great energy.

Benito Juárez had been educated by a good priest named Salanueva, who had taught him his first letters. From his home he went to the seminary at Oaxaca, where he rose to a professorship in law. He soon became noted for his liberal tendencies, and had occasion to attract public attention as governor of his native state. Joining the revolution of Ayutla, he was named minister of justive under Alvarez, where he soon proposed to carry out

[1]El Pueblo Mexicano—Lara. p. 208.

his political and social theories. Juárez was chiefly responsible for the decree of November 23, 1855, which suppressed the religious "fueros" or special rights, and also those of the army.

Comonfort protested. The crisis was avoided by the resignation of Alvarez as president, the substitution of Comonfort to that high post, and the appointment of Juárez as chief justice of the supreme court.

This did not prevent open hostility to the decree of November 23. In the town of Zacapoaxtla a priest named Ortega rose in arms, supported by the conservative officer, Haro y Tamariz. They raised the old war cry of "Religión y Fueros" which had already been heard in 1833. Comonfort, as has been said, was a moderate liberal, but he could ill brook the armed rebellion of an intransigent priest at such a perilous time. He marched on Puebla, the center of the revolt; he took that city on the 23rd of May, 1856, confiscating the goods of the Church to defray the expense of the expedition. He charged the bishop, Don Pelagio Antonio de Labastida y Dávalos, with instigating the revolt, and suggested to that prelate the advisability of leaving the country, which he did with haste.

The episode of Zacapoaxtla was the first omen of that tragedy of three years which has passed into history as the War of Reform.

Comonfort returned to Mexico determined to impose his policy of compromise, but also determined to permit no clerical excesses.

On June 5, 1856, he decreed the nationalization of the properties of the Society of Jesus, dissolving at the same time the brotherhood. On September 17th the Order of St. Francis was suspended on account of a conspiracy that had been discovered in the great convent of that order in Mexico City. Comonfort ordered a street cut through the middle of the convent grounds as punishment for the crime.

Before studying in detail the measures of reform which were adopted by the liberal regime that had been born at Ayutla, it will be necessary to speak more at length about the policy of Comonfort.

Already it has been said that he was a moderate liberal. Comonfort sincerely believed that the best solution lay in a policy of conciliation and compromise. He appointed to the ministry those who clearly showed conciliatory tendencies. He attempted to appease the liberals and to satisfy the clericals by half-way measures. He sought "the just and equitable fusion of both parties" hoping thereby to bury once and for all the old seeds of enmity. These tactics bore tragic results. The clericals were as discontented as ever. At every measure of conciliation the Catholic bishops levelled anathema and excommunication. The liberals, disgusted, called such a policy absurd, because as they put it, "it is an absurdity to try to find the golden mean between such opposite and antagonistic principles as the liberal and the conservative".

In truth, Comonfort duped himself into believing that he could succeed by such methods. He ignored that the liberals and conservatives had challenged each other to mortal combat; he forgot that in the age-old tradition of the Church, "compromise" is an unknown term; he refused to recognize that as long as the Church maintained its grip on the sources of its power—privileges, education, wealth and civil jurisdiction—there could be no social reorganization for the country. He was calling to the task of building a new social edifice men who had architectural notions as separated as the poles. Unable to see the irrationality of his policy, he broke the last barrier that stood between the country and the abyss. Into it he was soon to hurl himself and his countrymen, in the depths of which was to be fought the fratricidal conflict known as the War of Reform.

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Before passing to a consideration of the causes of the War of Reform, its development and consequences, a word may be said concerning the condition of the Catholic Church in other Spanish-American republics at that time.

Mexico was not an isolated example of a people striving for redemption from hierarchical control.

In Brazil the struggle over investiture had taken on serious proportions. The government insisted on the right to name candidates for the ecclesiastical vacancies; the Holy See denied this right. In Chile the conservatives battled savagely all idea of change, taking as their war cry, "Our cause is the cause of the Church; our interests are those of Catholicism; our emblem, the tiara and the keys".

In Peru a bitter parliamentary fight was being waged to introduce reforms. Conservatism won the day; and when the national representatives filed out of the chamber after the final session, "the noble ladies of Lima, in an extasis of joy and enthusiasm, offered olive crowns and garlands of roses to the deputies who had defended the rights of religion, while at the same time they threw hay at those who had asked for the toleration of all cults".[1]

Ecuador, Peru, Paraguay and Uruguay were each local theaters of the same drama, where liberalism met with success in some, disconsolate failure in others. It seemed as if liberalism had undammed a growing undercurrent of independence, not only from political masters across the seas, but also from dictators of social and political fortunes at home.

Mexico did not stand alone, but she did stand above her sister republics in the intensity of the struggle, the horror of her suffering, the sublimity of her sacrifices, and the height of her achievements.

The period of 1821-1856 can be summarized by recalling the chaos of Mexico's public administration, the absence of concrete ideals and elevated leaders around whom organization might crystalize and aspirations focus. Her public wealth controlled by the hierarchy, dissipated by pompous sycophants as Santa-Anna, or destroyed by ceaseless warfare, the republic received full in the face the added blows of foreign aggression, saw her territory dismembered, her men of vision proscribed, and her chains riveted stronger than ever. Chaos and annihilation, if there ever was such. A handful of dar-

[1]Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 2 p. 560.

ing intellects thought that a new nation could be forged of this wreckage. In the next section we shall see what manner of men these were, the work they accomplished and the obstacles they overcame to do it.

CHAPTER IV

Revolution, Second Empire and Reform—1857–1876

The constitution of 1824 inadequate for the country. Comonfort—his policy of conciliation—the Plan of Tacubaya. Juárez becomes president and immediately flees from Mexico City—The War of Reform begins—Juárez and "legality". Political and military events of the War of Reform. The first laws of reform decreed at Veracruz—nature of these laws—reaction of the Catholic clergy to the laws of reform. Last military events of the War of Reform—liberalism triumphs and conservative-clericalism is annihilated—Observations on the War of Three Years. Foreign intervention—Spain, France and England. Treaty of London—Invasion of Mexico—Agreements of La Soledad—negotiations suspended—advance of the French and outbreak of the War of Intervention; Puebla. Capture of Mexico City—Juárez flees for the second time from his capital—Relationship between the French forces and the clericals of Mexico who sought a monarchical restoration. The Junta de Notables—Prominent part played by clergymen in the provisional government. Maximilian—Aims and policies of the Church party in seeking a restoration—the intervention and triumph of French arms as an excuse for destroying the republican form of government. Conservative intrigues to involve Maximilian, Archduke of Austria—Miramar—Maximilian's terms for accepting the Mexican throne. Maximilian and Carlota arrive in their new realm—form of government set up—the conservative reaction is complete—Juárez continues in exile—War measures. Maximilian initiates his policy of moderation and conciliation—disgust of the conservatives and disagreement with Maximilian—Conflict with Rome and impossibility of agreement on the religious reform—Maximilian undermines his own power—the beginning of the end. Napoleon and the Monroe Doctrine—The treaty of Miramar—French perfidy once more—Maximilian vacillates—French troops evacuate Mexican territory—Maximilian throws himself into the arms of the clerical-conservative party. The last front—the conservative army—Puebla and Díaz—Querétaro—Trial and execution of Maximilian—Juárez returns after ten years of persecution. Juárez. Lerdo de Tejada, the laws of 1873 and 1875.

The most important achievement of the Ayutla revolution was the Constitution of 1857. The constant clamor of the liberals since 1833 had been for a new Magna Charta which would make the reform the supreme law of the land.

The Constitution of 1824 had been more or less in effect up to 1856. However, it had been suspended innumerable times, when not vitiated by the constant anarchy that assailed the country. Santa-Anna had mutilated it with his seven laws; and, all in all, it had served as a convenient instrument for misgovernment and fraud.

It has been pointed out that the document of 1824 contained what was ostensibly one significant defeat for the conservatives—the establishment of the federal system. On the other hand, the constitution contained a very serious, a fatal contradiction. It proclaimed the usual egalitarian doctrines, established the republican ideal as its goal, and declared itself an instrument of popular, democratic government. There was the well-known profession of equality for all men included in the declaration of principles. But in the sanction of certain practices, the constituents incurred in a grave error. They proclaimed the freedom of the press, but permitted the continuation of censorship by the Church. They declared the sovereignty of the nation, the inviolability of political rights, but countenanced the nefarious intervention of armed forces in the exercise of these rights. They established the freedom of conscience and equality before the law, but also affirmed religious intolerance and the continuation of religious and military privileges, not to speak of the huge land monopolies in the hands of the Church which were left untouched.

Zavala, of all liberal thinkers, put this criticism most concisely. "Let there be established", he said, "a religious, military or civil aristocracy, if need be. Anything but the present constitution, which is formed upon the ample basis of liberty and modelled on that of the American states, and yet maintains a state or religion without tolerance of any other, which permits military chiefs to command civil administration, convents and monasteries of both sexes which are regulated according to canon law; under which there live three million citizens without an inch of property and no known means of subsistence, half a million illiterates with the most ample political rights; which allows military tribunals to try privileged cases. In short, it is a constitution which contains all the stimulants to unlimited liberty and a complete absence of all social guarantees. Such a condition cannot but result in a continuous war between such antagonistic interests".[1]

[1]Ensayo Histórico—Zavala. Vol. 1 p. 36.

The Constitution of 1824 was a compromise between the two parties; hence this anomaly. It was only a question of time until one of the two parties would be sufficiently strong to annihilate the other and with it those precepts that were prejudicial to it.

The liberals of 1856 were eager to reap the benefits of their new power in the framing of a new constitution that would eliminate the evils of the previous one. Juárez was incessant in his demands for a constituent congress, which finally met during the latter part of 1856. Previously, however, he was careful to pave the way for the new charter by a series of decrees of a radical nature. On April 26 the coaction of civil authorities to enforce the obligations of religious vows and the collection of tithes was suppressed. Gómez Farías had done this in 1833, but Santa-Anna had suspended the decree. On the 5th of June the Society of Jesus was once more suppressed; on the 25th of the same month, the famous order of "disamortization" of Church lands.

This last did not confiscate Church property. It merely commanded the Church to sell its real property to private individuals, receiving an equitable return, and prohibiting the future acquirement of real property. The effect of this was of two kinds. First, it was a political measure, because it disarmed the clergy of its most powerful weapon, the funds which it had constantly used to meddle in the political intrigues of the nation. Second, it was an economic measure, placing in circulation a capital of more than 200,000,000 pesos, represented by lands and buildings, as well as mortgages thereon.

Naturally, the opposition of the clergy broke out immediately. The clergy of Puebla declared that "the decrees issued by Juárez destroyed the sacred pontifical rights, establishing as they do a reform in the discipline of the Church, which is the exclusive right of the Roman pontiff. Any one obeying the decree of June 26 does so under pain of excommunication. It is not *lawful* to obey those decrees".[1]

These protests to the contrary notwithstanding, the

[1]Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 308.

liberals carried the day. On February 5, 1857, the new constitution was officially proclaimed; it was to go into effect on December 5 of that year.

The articles that dealt with the religious reform were 5, 13 and 27. They read as follows:

Article 5. No one shall be compelled to render personal services without due compensation and his full consent. The State shall not permit any contract, covenant or agreement to be carried out having for its object the abridgment, loss or irrevocable sacrifice of the liberty of man, whether by reason of labor, education or religious vows.

The law, therefore, does not recognize, nor consent to the establishment of, monastic orders of whatever denomination or for whatever purpose contemplated. Nor shall any person legally agree to his own proscription or exile.

Article 13. In the Mexican republic *no one shall be tried according to private laws or by special tribunals. No person or corporation shall have privileges* nor enjoy emoluments which are not in compensation for a public service and established by law. Military jurisdiction shall be recognized. only for the trial of criminal cases having direct connection with military discipline. The law shall clearly define the cases included in this exception.

Article 27. . . . Par. 2. No religious corporations, or civil corporations when under the patronage, direction or administration of the former, shall have legal capacity to acquire title to or administer real property other than the buildings immediately and directly destined to the service or purposes of said corporations or institutions: . . . ".

In these three articles was synthesized the most effective check that the Church had yet faced. They destroyed special privileges, canon courts, convents, civil coaction and the material power of the hierarchy through land monopoly. Education was left vaguely regulated by the terse statement that "instruction is free". (Art. 3). The power of the Church was crumbling rapidly. If

the effects of these three articles were permitted to develop the struggle was completely lost.

In the conservative camp it was now a question of open resistance; with the liberals, it was a problem of enforcing the enunciated principles.

Many sincerely doubted the possibility of the latter. Said one, "The Constitution of 1857 was a beautiful suit that had been made for us without taking any measurements". Another, a conservative, complained that "to give to a nation born yesterday the constitution of another whose life extends over many years, nay, even centuries, is the same as pretending that an infant should walk with the step of a robust man".

The first open negation of the clergy to observe the new constitution came in the State of Jalisco. The local legislature of that state had adopted a charter modelled closely on the national document. The legislature sent an order to the religious authorities commanding them to swear allegiance to the state charter. The bishop of Guadalajara refused point blank, saying that "the Constitution of Jalisco is opposed to the spirit of the Church, it is contrary to canon law, and its enforcement will severely injure its discipline".

In March of 1857 the national government ordered all public employees and officials to swear allegiance to the constitution, under pain of losing their positions on refusal to do so. In a thrice the clergy declared that it would excommunicate any and all who did so, denying the ministration of sacraments, even that of extreme unction.

The act was plain rebellion. Against the law of the land the clergy set the canon law of the Holy See. To the decrees of the supreme national government it opposed the bulls of the popes from time immemorial. It was only a question of weeks before the tension would break somewhere.

Such, then, were the decrees and the constitutional reforms, which precipitated the War of Reform, and such was the immediate attitude of the clergy. The situation late in November of 1857 is summed up by Galindo in his "La Gran Década Nacional".

"From that time there was no doubt as to the course that should be pursued; the clerical party had identified itself with the centralized form of government, the liberal with the federal system; the former represented the traditions of the past which were so repugnant to new institutions of the nation, the latter raised the emblem of reform and progress. The conflict was inevitable between those two political forces; it was vain to seek conciliation between them; the definite triumph of one implied the complete ruin of the other".[1]

The War of Reform broke out on December 17, 1857, with none other at the head of the revolt than President Comonfort himself. The conservatives, under the leadership of Don Felix Zuloaga, had won over the chief executive by the notorious plan of Tacubaya, which called for a restoration of Church prerogatives, and the maintenance of Comonfort in power.

Comonfort's treason, together with the wealth that backed the coup of Tacubaya and the careful propaganda that had preceded it, threw the liberals into confusion. Comonfort, by his actions, descended from his high post of president to the plane of a common rebel, and Juárez, who was chief justice of the supreme court, became, according to the constitution, president.

He immediately seized the fallen banner of liberalism and legality and gathered around him his disseminated followers. The capital had fallen into complete control of the conservatives. Zuloga was complete master of the situation. Comonfort had quickly repented of his treason and had tried to rejoin his old comrades, but these spurned him contemptuously. In disgrace, he left Mexico as a voluntary exile.

Juárez, whose life was in imminent danger, had fled from the capital. He had established his government in Guadalajara. While there he came within a hair's breadth of losing his life. The two factions of Jalisco were disputing the possession of the city. A patrol of conservatives had made its way unobserved to the legislative hall, where Juárez and his ministers were quar-

[1]Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 36.

tered. Taken completely by surprise, they were faced by a mob of riflemen who levelled their arms at the group composed of the president and his followers. Someone gave the order to prepare arms. Juárez said nothing. Calmly he leaned against a pillar and prepared to receive the charge. Suddenly a voice was heard in a passionate harangue addressed to the soldiers; it was Guillermo Prieto, whose eloquence on that day saved the life of Mexico's Lincoln. The soldiers retired and soon afterwards Juárez and his cabinet were set free.

On January 1st, Zuloaga named himself president of the republic. He immediately promulgated two decrees: the first, nullifying that of June 25, 1856, which had ordered the sale of Church properties; the second, restoring the privileges and fueros of the clergy and the army to the status they had enjoyed in 1853, during the Santa-Anna dictatorship. In fact, it was not only a matter of nullifying decrees; it was a general policy of vitiating the entire Constitution of 1857.

While Juárez was fleeing from one place to another in the west, and finally embarking at Acapulco, the war developed rapidly in the east. The impetus of the conservative arms was irresistible. General Echeagaray, commandant of Puebla, declared in favor of the Plan of Tacubaya and immediately organized the Division of the Orient. He left Puebla on March 3, 1858, boasting that his troops were "the army of the Lord of Hosts, and of Israel". The event was celebrated by a solemn Te Deum in which "the venerable cathedral chapters all ecclesiastics, the religious corporations, colleges and the city aldermen took part".

To describe the military developments of this bloody conflict is not within the scope of this study. Only some very general facts can be set down.

It seemed as if neither side knew nor cared for the meaning of the word mercy. No quarter was given or asked. The incident at the fort of Perote is typical of the tactics used by both armies.

Towards the end of October, 1858, General Echeagaray had taken the important fort of Perote, a strategic

point in the State of Veracruz. He executed one-fifth of the garrison that had maintained the defense, and sent the rest in chains to military prisons.

The fertile regions of Puebla, Veracruz, México and Tlaxcala were reduced to smoking heaps. Crops were destroyed or confiscated and their owners murdered. Neither age nor sex was a safeguard against excesses that made the crusade against the Albigensians pale by contrast, and it was more than an aphorism that brother was armed against brother and father against son. Only half-crazed men could have been capable of the cruelties, the sacrifices and the heroism which made the War of Reform an epic of blood and fire.

It has often been said that the liberal soldiers died on the battle field cursing God and the Church. Doubtless some did, but that was not the general rule. Those who carried arms against the clergy and its conservative allies for the most part retained a pure concept of religion. On the fields of battle conservative and liberal asked for spiritual comfort in their last moments. When the bishops ordered that priests should not minister to dying liberals, the bishops as well as lower clergy were threatened with death if the order was obeyed. The measure was effective. Thenceforth the sacraments were ministered to all alike.

For three long years the bands, the guerrillas and the armies swept to and fro over the land, with varying degrees of success. It was not until the middle of 1859 that fortune began to smile on the liberal arms, and that the tide began to turn.

§

The participation of the clergy in this fratricidal conflict is revealed clearly by the documents of the times as well as by the opinions emitted by the high clergy.

Since the earliest days of the war there had been abundant clerical participation in the political intrigues that accompanied the war. Late in 1857, Governor Alatriste of Puebla discovered an extensive plot to overthrow his administration and begin the revolt. At the head of the conspiracy were several prominent clergy-

men of the city. Indignant and alarmed, Alatriste ordered the confiscation of church properties and imprisoned those whose names appeared on the correspondence of the plotters. The bishop of Puebla, Don Enstio Espitella, protested, saying that if any clergymen were involved they were personally responsible and in no way represented the Church. To this, Governor Alatriste answered:

"If it were not for the fact that the scandal would grow by making public the investigations and findings of the police, I could reveal to you that the end of the threads that manipulate these intrigues are often in the hands of a priest".[1]

There had circulated in the city of Puebla, notes of credit signed by the bishop, which were valid as means of exchange among conservatives, and which were emitted on the credit of the regime that was to follow the coup of December, 1857.

When the constitution was proclaimed on February 5, 1857, clerical opposition was more potential than effective. It needed one rallying call that would focus an attack on that execrable document. That call came from none other than His Holiness, Pio Nono, or Pious IX. The pope's encyclical said in part:

"In order that the faithful who reside in Mexico as well as the Catholic universe may know that we reprove and condemn energetically everything that the Mexican government has done against the Catholic religion, against the Church, against its sacred ministers and pastors, against its laws, rights and properties, as well as against the authority of the Holy See, we raise our pontifical voice . . . to condemn, reprove and to declare null and void and of no worth such decrees, and everything else that the civil authority may have done against our Apostolic authority and with prejudice against religion".[2]

That from Pio Nono, who was soon to have his hands full at home with Cavour and Garibaldi.

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[1]Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 60.
[2]México a través de los Siglos—Vol. 5 p. 236.

On May 3, 1857, the archbishop of Mexico, Dr. Lázaro de la Garza y Ballesteros, wrote the following letter to the mother superior of the Convent of St. Ines:

" . . . the Church is suffering from a terrible persecution, but some noble men have offered to re-establish the Catholic religion, and in order to provide funds for the expenses in pursuit of this plan, it has been decided to distribute a part of those expenses among the convents of this dioces in proportion to their ability. Today you will receive from the Prioress of Jesús María, three thousand pesos; tomorrow you will receive an equal sum from the convents of the Incarnation and Conception; one thousand pesos each from the convents of St. Isabel, St. Bernard, Regina, St. Jerome and José de la Gracia, which you will keep for me until further orders. Remember that you are obliged to keep all that I write you an inviolable secret, as if it were *in confesione*".[1]

From this confidential epistle it can be seen that long before the blow of December 15 the work of undermining the Juárez administration had begun. Financial aid from the clergy antedated the war and continued throughout it.

According to the official minutes of the cathedral chapter of Mexico City for April, 1858, the conservative armies received several heavy "loans" during this month. On April 8, the archbishop of Mexico delivered four drafts to the government of Zuloaga, three for 666,200 pesos each, and one for 160,000 pesos. On the 28th of June 500,000 pesos were delivered, and again at the end of July, one million pesos.[1] Thus, according to ecclesiastical documents, three months after the outbreak at Tacubaya, the conservative government had received 3,658,600 pesos from the Church, and by the end of July the total had reached 4,658,600 pesos.

In the following year during March, the capital was threatened by the liberal forces under Degollado. These had descended to the outskirts of the city, and were preparing for the attack. In such straits, the archbishop, Lázaro de la Garza, wrote to Márquez as follows: "In

[1]Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 3 p. 65.
[2]Ibid., Vol. 1 pp. 436-440.

spite of the known poverty of the clergy and other ecclesiastical corporations, *and taking into account that the Mexican Church has always been generous with the governments that have respected its rights;* nevertheless, considering the proximity of enemy troops and the present state of siege, the cathedral chapter has agreed to contribute the sum of 40,000 pesos daily, to be used for the expenses of the troops that defend this city, provided the siege last not more than ten days".[1]

Due to mismanagement on the part of the liberal chiefs, the attack failed and Degollado retired to the mountains.

Again, in August of 1860, when the conservative cause had begun to wane, the religious authorities held a meeting at Mexico City to devise means of bolstering the depleted finances of its armies. It was decided that "the time had come when all the churches should contribute their silver (ornaments and plate) else all would be lost; that it was not only licit to do this, but that it was necessary, that all the silver plate of the churches of the capital should be contributed to furnish the 300,000 pesos necessary for the expenses of fifteen days; and that, if in fifteen days, the situation was saved, other means could be devised for collecting funds". The only class of silver articles exempted from this levy were those needed immediately for the ministering of sacraments.[2]

These measures were taken by the hierarchy immediately after the battle of Silao, won on August 10 by the liberal forces who had defeated General Miramón, clerical chief and now president of the nation.

These heavy monetary contributions by the Church which so prolonged the bloody war were justified by it because there was so much at stake. True. But the responsibility which they implied was that of taking a direct and transcendental part in a political struggle, of meddling in politics. This the Church has never been willing to admit, and today it stands face to face with the contradiction incurred by its steadfast negation and the revelation of facts. The nation was a vast field of butch-

[1]Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 229.
[2]Ibid., p. 307.

ery, and into the war machine the Church fed as grist the wealth accumulated through centuries of pious contribution, of hoarding and of wheedling.

After embarking from Acapulco, Juárez had finally landed at Veracruz, where he established the seat of the legal government. The port was strongly fortified and made well nigh impregnable, and while the fortunes of war in the interior fluctuated in disconcerting variability, Veracruz became the hope of the liberal cause, the only secure place for its leaders, the bulwark of its hopes.

But quite aside from its military significance, the port was the scene of the promulgation of the famous laws of reform, decreed by Juárez during the month of July, 1859.

The first of these was promulgated on July 7. It provided:

1. The government adopts, as its rule and norm, the invariable and complete independence between the State and the Church.
2. All corporations of regulars of the masculine sex are hereby suppressed, and the members thereof are hereby secularized.
3. All brotherhoods, societies, and other corporations of a religious nature are suppressed.
4. All novitiates are suspended in all convents of nuns; only the nuns who have taken vows will be permitted to continue in the convents, together with all their goods and possessions.
5. All the properties at present controlled by the regular and secular clergy are declared the property of the nation.
6. The remuneration which the faithful give to the priests for ministration of sacraments and other religious services, is a matter of purely individual agreement, in no case permitting the intervention of the civil authority.
7. The government will protect religious liberty in the nation as an indispensable necessity for its prosperity and development.

On the 12th day of July another decree was published, dealing entirely with the nationalization of Church properties and the means of achieving that end. On the 25th of that same month were added the laws which declared marriage a civil contract, permitted toleration of all religions, and secularized cemeteries. Later, on August 11, a list of official holidays was given out, substituting that of the Church, which made half the year a holiday.

These, in outline, were the laws of reform, which Juárez, through the necessity of circumstances and through statesmanlike vision, promulgated at Veracruz. They were, in the first place, war measures, but they were also a declaration, definite and unequivocal, of the program that liberals proposed to follow when success should crown their arms.

The publication of these decrees evoked the usual protests from the clergy. President Miramón, the young and dashing ally of the Church, gave a moving profession of faith on July 12. "I recognize the nullity of the decree of June 25, 1856; I swear upon my honor the highest respect and most secure guaranty for the interests of the Church; I swear that I shall not be the one to reduce by a single cent, its riches; I will forever support and maintain its prerogatives and independence; I am disposed to follow the dictates of my conscience and the statutes of our canon law, until I destroy that germ of discord within our country". Small wonder that the Church called him the heaven-born, the redeemer.

The publication of the laws of reform marks the turning point of the war. Degollado and González Ortega had held the conservative forces in check in the interior, while Veracruz twice turned back the savage onslaughts of Miramón, who recognized the significance of a victory there. His second repulse at the port started the landslide. On August 10, 1860, he was decisively beaten at Lomas de Silao; General González Ortega followed up his advantage, trailing Miramón towards the capital. Previously he attacked and occupied Guadaljara, Oaxaca, Toluca and Querétaro. The circle tight-

ened around the capital. Dispositions were made for the final blow, which came on December 22, 1860. On the hills of San Miguel Calpulalpam he administered a crushing defeat to Miramón in a brief battle that lasted two hours.

The victory was complete. The War of Reform was over. On the 25th of December the liberal army entered Mexico City, three years almost to a day since the coup of Tacubaya. The following day the laws of reform were solemnly proclaimed by the victorious general.

On January 1, 1861, Juárez made his triumphal entry into the city. His first step was to expel from the national territory the papel nuncio, Msgr. Luis Clementi, along with Archbishop Garza y Ballesteros, and Bishops Mungina, Madrid, Espinosa and Barajas.

The task before the stoical Indian was tremendous. The country dripping with blood; production at a standstill; beneficent laws were on paper, but the governmental machinery was disorganized, making enforcement almost impossible. The work of reconstruction was one of years and decades, demanding as an indispensable condition complete domestic peace.

Juárez threw himself into the work with courage. The first necessity was financial reconstruction, and to secure the necessary aid for the rehabilitation of industry, he ordered the suspension of payment on the foreign debt in July, 1861. In taking this absolutely necessary step, Juárez invited disaster in another form, which we shall study in the proper time.

In the meantime, the liberal cause was still harassed at home by the guerrilla warfare carried on by the remnants of the reactionary forces. These, under Márquez, Cobos and Mejia, ravaged the countryside, sometimes raiding the suburbs of the capital. They carried death and anarchy wherever they appeared, still under the old cry of "Religión y Fueros".

It was in the persecution of these bands that the liberal cause suffered some lamentable losses. Don Melchor Ocampo, who had been the liberal member of Comonfort's cabinet in 1856, had retired to his country home.

Here he was one day seized by Márquez and summarily hanged. The murder of this illustrious liberal raised a wave of indignation everywhere, revealing as it did the inhumanity of those who called themselves the defenders of religion. Two other prominent victims were sacrificed by Márquez and his raiders—General Leandro Valle and Santos Degollado.

This situation indicated only one thing: that the conservative-clericals did not consider themselves as beaten. They would disband, harass the government by guerilla attacks, maintain discord and anarchy throughout the country, and abide their time while their foreign emissaries searched the European courts for ambitions that might be turned to good account.

For the time being, the complications arising out of the foreign debts kept Juárez in a perpetual crisis, so to speak.

The causes for the suspension of payments on foreign debts have been set forth. The most interested foreign powers were England, France and Spain. These powers signed the agreement of London on October 31, 1861, whereby they agreed to send expeditionary forces to Mexico to compel the renewal of payments on the debts.

Juárez answered the triple alliance by saying he was disposed to enter into negotiations to determine a fair solution to the problem, on the basis of equitable payments.

The powers accepted and the preliminary agreements of La Soledad were signed. By the terms of this agreement the expeditionary troops were to occupy the inland points of Córdoba, Orizaba and Tehuacán in order to protect the foreign soldiers from the effects of the unhealthy coast climate. These troops were to return to Veracruz if the negotiations broke off.

When the negotiations had proceeded a few days it became evident that there was little understanding between the French, English and Spanish delegates. The Spanish representative, General Prim, insisted on fair play for Juárez and refused to shelter any plan for a

conservative reaction. On the other hand, it became clear that the question of debts was a mere subterfuge for the French emperor, Napoleon III. In March, General Laurencez disembarked at Veracruz with additional troops, and with him came the notorious reactionaries—Almonte, Miranda and Haro y Tamariz, the moving spirits of the monarchical project.

General Prim made it plain that he would not be a party to the intrigues of the French. The English seconded his position. So, on April 9, 1862, in view of the insistence of Laurencez to shelter the conservative plotters, the Spanish and English forces withdrew from their outposts and re-embarked for Europe.

According to the terms of the agreement of la Soledad, the French should have retired to Veracruz. Alleging shallow reasons for breaking the pact, the French remained in possession of Córdoba.

The real motives of the intervention now became clear. Napoleon III, dreaming of colonial empires to counterbalance the growing power of Prussia on the continent, had cast his eyes on Mexico. It so happened that at the same time the clerical-conservatives were casting about for outside assistance to establish their much dreamed of monarchy. The debt payments, the treaty of London and finally the agreements of la Soledad were used as decoys until French troops could be safely introduced into the country. After that, every agreement became a scrap of paper.

Furthermore, the presence of the reactionary leaders in the French camp more than confirmed all suspicion. Almonte, Haro y Tamariz and Fr. Miranda were guests at the headquarters of Laurencez. Under the protection of French guns, Almonte declared himself president of the republic, while Zuloaga protested, claiming for himself that distinction.

The advance of the French troops began at once. On the 5th of May, 1862, they attempted the assault of Puebla, defended by troops under Ignacio Zaragoza. The French were routed completely, being compelled to return to Orizaba to reorganize and await the coalition with the conservative guerrillas under Márquez.

This chieftan had sworn "to triumph in the cause of religion and society or to die in the attempt". Eventually he did neither, but he joined forces with Laurencez on May 18, 1862.

On the 16th of March, 1863, there landed a considerable French force under the command of Forey, who came to relieve Laurencez. Once more, at the head of 30,000 picked troops, the French generals assaulted Puebla, now under the command of González Ortega, the victor of Calpulalpam. The assaults were repulsed, and the siege began. It lasted 62 days, during which the small republican army sustained assaults nearly every day. Finally, on May 17, after relief from Comonfort had failed to arrive, Ortega spiked his guns and surrendered the city. In his staff was the young Porfirio Díaz.

The attitude of the clergy during this period was significant. Only in one place, Jalisco, was there a clerical protest against the invasion. But the high Church authorities carefully avoided committing themselves. A contemporary daily insisted that this silence was a sign of complicity with the French. "Why," it asked, "does the Church at the capital kept silent? Why does it not protest and thereby set an example for the rest of the country? Can it be that by its silence it aids the intervention?"

The hierarchy remained impassive, and its sphinx-like silence was not broken until Forey entered the capital at the head of his troops on June 7, when the wild bells of the cathedral rang out their welcome to the forerunner of the monarchy.

On the 31st day of May, Juárez had fled Mexico City, carrying with him the standard of legality and the texts of the laws of reform, still unenforced. He had governed barely seventeen months before he was again forced on a protracted pilgrimage in the north.

Forey immediately called together a committee of government, which soon gave way to an assembly of notables, whose duty it was to determine the future form of government for the nation. In this assembly figured

such men as Juan Almonte and Archbishop Labastida y Dávalos, who had been exiled by Juárez. This assembly decided to implant a moderate, hereditary monarchy, with a Catholic prince. The title of the sovereign was to be Emperor of Mexico, and the crown was to be offered to Maximilian, archduke of Austria. In case of his refusal, his Majesty, Napoleon III, was to designate some other Catholic prince.

Such was the beginning of the realization of the dreams of the clerical party. Back in 1852 Santa-Anna had been called back to institute the dictatorship that was to be "the prologue of a monarchy". The revolution of Ayutla had postponed that plan, and later the War of Reform made it seem definitely out of the question. Came then the treaty of London, the collusion of the French and the incomparable opportunity of founding the monarchy with the aid of French arms.

In 1854, Santa-Anna had sent Don José Gutiérrez Estrada to the courts of England, France, Austria and Spain "to arrange with all or one of these governments the establishment of a monarchy".

As soon as the assembly of notables had formulated its plans, it constituted itself into a regency and sent a committee to Europe to offer the crown to Maximilian. This embassy included José Gutiérrez Estrada, Joaquín V. Leon, Fr. Francisco Miranda, Ignacio Aguilar, Antonio Escandón and José M. de Landa, all old-time henchmen of the clerical party.

Maximilian, archduke of Austria and ex-governor of Lombardy, was at that time living an idyllic romance at Miramar, with his young and charming wife, Carlota. He received the Mexican emissaries with courtesy and listened gravely to their proposal. He did not accept at once, but asked the visitors to await his decision.

Before such could be given, some steps of primary importance had to be taken. In the first place, Maximilian desired to be assured that this call was not from a small political group, but from the masses of the Mexican people. The consent of his brother Joseph, later emperor of Austria, had to be secured. Lastly, the support of the

French troops had to be assured by agreement with Napoleon III.

As to the first obstacle, it was easily overcome. The committee presented to Maximilian a petition signed by some six million Mexican citizens who were clamoring to crown him emperor. The gullible archduke considered the fake petition as genuine, and accepted the call. As to the other points, Joseph had compelled his brother to relinquish all rights to the Austrian throne, thus leaving him free for his adventure; and Napoleon, by the treaty of Miramar, had agreed to maintain a considerable armed force in Mexico until the end of 1868.

With these inconveniences satisfactorily arranged, Maximilian and his consort, whose ambitions had played no small part in the matter, accepted the gracious offer of the Regency. On May 29, 1864, the royal pair landed at Veracruz and on the 12th of the following month they arrived at the capital.

It need not be pointed out here that certain things were required of Maximilian in return for his elevation to the Mexican throne. The clericals who had put him into power expected a complete return to the balmy days of the Spanish rule. They expected and demanded special privileges, intolerance for all other religions, protection for Church properties, and complete control of education. It was a conservative reaction in every extension of the term.

Nothing could be more natural. The clergy had sent its representatives to Miramar with the offer of the crown; the clergy it was who maintained public opinion within its control favorable to the monarchy. When Maximilian arrived the archbishop publicly stated that the only support that Maximilian had, excepting that of Napoleon III, was the clerical party. He also published a manifesto welcoming the new rulers with lavish phrases, and exhorting his flocks to obedience and submission to the foreign prince.

Maximilian himself was not unaware of his debt to the Church. But whether because of his faith in the promises of Napoleon, or whether because of his inepti-

tude, he very soon gave signs of straining at the leash. Besides, he considered his Mexican venture as an experiment in moderate liberal government, and was anxious to demonstrate to his reactionary relatives in Europe, by his beneficent paternalism, that he was in truth an enlightened prince of the 19th century.

This explains the bungling beginning which he made in his new administration. He appointed to his cabinet such liberals as Juan de Dios Peza and Fernando Ramírez. He even nourished a vague idea of asking Juárez to enter the cabinet in return for reformatory concessions. Those who considered themselves most closely allied to the prince daily received at his court demonstrations of disdain; the emperor was bent on playing at democratic monarch, much as Louis XVI played at locksmith at Versailles.

Such was the discontent among the clericals with Maximilian that even the ultra-reactionary, Dr. Miranda, who had gone to Miramar to offer the throne, declared on his death bed his disappointment with the Austrian, saying that he was "a person of weak character".

Very soon the emperor carried his theory of "wise liberal institutions" into the sphere of action. He ordered public employees to work on Sundays and dismissed many who had rendered valuable services to the conservatives. He even attempted to dismiss the courageous Mejía. He constantly subordinated Mexican generals to French officers, invited prominent republicans to his board, and often dressed in the popular republican dress of the day, which "decent people" disdained.

Towards the close of 1864 a papal nuncio, Msgr. Meglia, arrived in Mexico, bringing instructions to arrange a concordat with the sovereign in order to put ecclesiastical affairs on a substantial basis. The pope's letter read in part: "Your Majesty well knows that to remedy the ills caused by the revolution and to return to the Church her happy days as quickly as possible, it is necessary, first of all, that the Catholic religion, to the exclusion of all others, continue to be the glory and joy of the Mexican nation. The bishops must have complete

liberty in accordance with the instructions we have given; the rights and possessions of the Church must be defined and permanently protected; no one shall be authorized to teach or publish false doctrines; all public instruction must be controlled by the ecclesiastical authorities. In short, all the chains which have subjected the Church to the despotism of the civil government must be broken".[1]

These were the basis which the Pope proposed for a settlement. It need not be pointed out that they completely enclosed those factors which, as has been seen, comprised the great temporal power of the Church.

The emperor, true to his ideals of a "wise-liberal" democratic monarchy, countered with the following proposals:

1. The toleration of all religions, but with the establishment of the Catholic as the official state faith.
2. Definite secularization of ecclesiastical properties.
3. The clergy to be subsidized by the state eliminating the system of private donation.
4. The right of the state to determine the laws and regulations governing the civil contract.

To these was added a provision that in every municipality a record of vital statistics should be kept by the priests, who were to undertake this responsibility in the capacity of *civil officials.*

Msgr. Meglia reiterated his proposals. The *reductio ad minimum* of his instructions: was the abolition of the laws of reform, the nullification of the sale of church lands and buildings and their restitution to the Church with compensations, the conservation of ecclesiastical privileges, and the proscription of all other cults. The nuncio refused to enter into negotiations, saying that he lacked the power to do so. This lack of power was explained by saying that "such authorization could not have been given by His Holiness, in as much as he could not suppose that the imperial government would propose to *carry on the work begun by Juárez*".

[1]La Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. II p. 156.

Maximilian's irreducible minimum irritated the nuncio who refused to cede one jot from the position he had been instructed to take. The emperor's ire was likewise aroused. He wrote to his minister of justice and ecclesiastical affairs, instructing him "to propose to us, as soon as possible, such measures as will tend towards the administration of justice without regard to the quality or distinction of persons. Also, such laws as will insure the rights created by the laws of reform, amending them where they seem to be excessive and unjust, in short—that the functions of the pastorate and the ministrations of sacraments may be carried on throughout the empire without burden to the people.

"You will also suggest to us such means as will revise and adjust the nationalization and disamortization of ecclesiastical properties, always maintaining yourself within the limits prescribed by the laws which decreed such nationalization.

"We entreat you to observe the principle of frank and ample toleration, remembering that the state religion is the Roman Catholic—Maximilian".[1]

Here, from the pen of the archduke himself, is a synthesis of his policy of conciliation, or, better, compromise, which led inevitably to Querétaro.

The instructions to the minister of justice provoked a furious storm among the clergy. The archbishop published a protest couched in the most violent terms manifesting complete disapproval of the emperor's policy. The latter parried with a bitter denunciation of his eminence, whom he called an ignoramus, reminding him that his position excluded him from meddling in political affairs, which he was doing, to the detriment of his pastoral duties. The empress openly seconded the position of her lord, even to calling the high prelates some very undignified names. The break between the clericals and the emperor was now a wide chasm. On the 26th of February, 1865, Maximilian decreed:

1. That the empire recognized the Roman Catholic as the state religion, and

[1]La Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 123.

2. That all cults would be tolerated, provided they were not repugnant to morality, civilization and good customs. The permission of the government was required for the establishment of a new cult.

On March 12, by government order, the cemeteries heretofore under the direction of the Church, were turned over to the civil authorities. It was furthermore provided that Protestant ministers should not be barred from the burying places alluded to.

Judging these events in their historical perspective it sometimes seems as if Maximilian was insane to hew away the chief supports of his throne by alienating his clerical partisans. But the two elements which have been mentioned were the basic causes of his policy; his vague idealism concerning wise, liberal democratic monarchies, and his reliance on the continued assistance of Napoleon's legions, which at this time numbered 47,600.

Not even the pope escaped without getting a verbal chastisement from the emperor. In April of 1865, Maximilian answered the threats of pontifical excommunication in this wise, "that the Holy See reveals its weakness more and more each day; that his Majesty would not recede in the face of the threats of Rome, being responsible only to God; that the archbishops and bishops of Mexico understood neither the times in which they live nor the nature of true Catholicism; that many of them are lacking in Christian charity; and that if the pope excommunicated him, he, the emperor, would be the fourth Austrian archduke to have received that distinction".[1] Harsh words, these, from the lips of one who had been held as the restorer of the faith in the land of Anáhuac.

Msgr. Meglia sailed from Mexico on June 1, 1865. The rupture with Rome was complete.

But now the emperor began to realize the precariousness of his posítion. He had rebuffed the conservatives and failed completely to reconcile the liberals. Juárez, from his hiding place in the north, constantly reaffirmed the legality of his cause and gained in strength day by day against the usurper. Besides, things were not

[1]La Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 363.

going well with Napoleon. The French marshalls were intractable and independent, and the United States government already had begun to exert pressure on Napoleon, who was told that the presence of French troops in Mexico involved a violation of the Monroe Doctrine.

Finally, in January, 1866, Maximilian recognized the fallacy of his political ideas, and decided on an abrupt change. He summoned to Mexico Don José Hidalgo, one of the most notorious interventionists among the clericals. This worthy explained the situation without mincing words. He told the monarch that the monarchists were disgruntled on account of the moderate liberal policy of the government; that they were offended at the insults proffered by both the emperor and his consort; that the most important posts in the administration had been given to the "juaristas" or partisans of Juárez; and that public opinion was strongly in favor of the retirement of the French troops.

Maximilian then asked for a list of the conservative leaders, with the purpose of selecting a new cabinet therefrom. Both Almonte and Hidalgo refused to furnish such a list. After pleadings and cajolings, he finally succeeded in forming a thoroughly conservative cabinet, which began to function in August, 1866. That ministry, however, was no stronger than the power of the sovereign who appointed it; it was a change that came too late.

The protests of the White House to Napoleon became sterner in tone after the close of the Civil War and Napoleon, hard pressed by the Prussian war-machine to the east, decided that it would be best to avoid complications with the northern republic. Accordingly, he gave orders to withdraw the French army of intervention, notwithstanding that this was in contravention of the treaty of Miramar, by whose terms Maximilian was entitled to the support of numerous French troops.

The situation was now alarming. Maximilian had as his only support the clerical-conservatives, who he had taken such pains to antagonize in 1865-66; the clericals, on their part, had only one hope—the permanence of Maximilian on Mexican territory. When Maximilian left

for Orizaba with the secret purpose of leaving the country, his cabinet became alarmed and promptly resigned. At Orizaba, Maximilian was finally convinced that his duty was to remain; furthermore, he had received a letter from his mother in which she commanded him to bury himself in the ruins of his empire rather than return to Europe in disgrace.

Accompanied by his ministers, he returned to Mexico City, where he received the news that his wife had gone insane. A council of state was held immediately, where Maximilian decided to throw himself fully into the arms of the clerical party. It was at this meeting that Don Alejandro Arango y Escandón addressed his famous diatribe at Marshall Bazaine, who had made final preparations for leaving Mexico with his troops. Turning to the French general, Arango y Escandón said, "Go, it does not matter. You have done very little for your sovereign, less for the Church, and absolutely nothing for your honor".

The next day Maximilian stood silently behind a curtain on the balcony of his palace, watching the last of the foreign troops file out of the city. He was alone with his fate.

The exigencies of the moment required energetic action. At a council of war the conservative army was divided into four divisions, under the command of Miramón, Mejía, Márquez and Almonte. It was decided to concentrate all forces at Querétaro, there to meet the liberal forces in decisive battle. The conservative army took possession of the city a few days before the liberals, under Régules, Corona, and Escobedo, arrived to establish the siege.

Márquez was sent to Mexico City to bring re-enforcements, but, disobeying orders, he marched to the relief of Puebla, then besieged by Porfirio Díaz. When the latter heard that Márquez was coming to relieve Puebla, he assaulted the city at dawn on April 2, turned about and annihilated Márquez and laid siege to Mexico City.

The condition of the conservatives at Quéretaro was desperate. Munitions and food were entirely exhausted.

The effects of the plague decimated their ranks, and the leaders continually failed to adopt a united course of action. Finally, it was decided to break through the republican lines on the morning of May 16; but at dawn of the 15th the convent of la Cruz, the key to the position, was surrendered to the liberals. Maximilian and a handful of subalterns fled to the Hill of the Bells, where they maintained a weak defense during a few hours. Shortly after the white flag appeared on the promontory. Firing ceased, and Maximilian descended, surrendering to the republican general.

A month later, on June 19, 1867, on the Hill of the Bells, Maximilian, Miramón and Mejía were executed, in spite of the protests from all over the world that were made to Juárez.

The empire was destroyed, the clericals annihilated, the laws of reform had triumphed. "The conservative party" as one historian puts it, "found its grave at Querétaro, and the traitors received an unforgetable lesson".

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Such is, briefly told, the history of Mexico's greatest decade, in which the clergy played such an important rôle. In the War of Reform, in the intervention and in the second empire, it constantly sought to establish in the laws of the land the rights and prerogatives of the old days. During all this period it was indeed a church militant, but it was militating with rifle in hand, not fighting to gain souls for the life to come.

Its responsibilities for the events of this period are inescapable. The Church used its wealth to support the armies of conservatism; it used the pulpit to disparage Juárez and to exalt Miramón, Márquez and Almonte. It converted the confessional into a powerful machine of propaganda, and gave its bells, its silver to be cast into cannon and coin wherewith to kill Mexican citizens. Its highest prelates accepted responsible positions in the political machinery of the state. It cannot elude a major responsibility for the deaths of Maximilian, of Mejía, and of thousands of innocents who were led to the

slaughter at Silao, Calpulalpam, Veracruz, Puebla, Oaxaca, La Carbonera and Querétaro.

True, the stakes were large. But the clergy should have paid heed to that which they had whispered in the ears of the peon, the helot and the pariah, for three centuries, "Ye are not of this world". The stakes were large, it played heavily, and lost.

Juárez returned once more to his capital. Through ten years of adversity he had maintained himself a virtual dictator, whose omnipotence was required for the salvation of the country. He was re-elected to the presidency by a narrow majority. He died suddenly in June, 1872, being succeeded by Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada.

The following year the laws of reform were raised to the category of constitutional precepts, and on September 25 of that year, was passed another law which reenforced the Juárez decrees.

Among other things, it provided that "the law shall not impose or proscribe the religious rites of matrimony. All persons are free to receive or to dispense with the benedictions of the priests, said ceremonies having no effects". "No religious corporation may acquire or administer real property nor mortgages on same". "The state and the Church are mutually independent; congress may pass no law prescribing a state religion". "Matrimony is a civil contract". These and other equally progressive measures were adopted as amendments to Article 27 of the Constitution of 1857.

In December, 1874, Lerdo de Tejada suppressed a few religious orders, among them the Sisters of Charity. Along with them went the Jesuits, whom he qualified as "pernicious foreigners". Ironically enough, Lerdo de Tejada breathed his last in the arms of one of the Sisters he had exiled, when he himself had been driven out of the country by Díaz, who had arisen in rebellion in 1875.

The year 1875 closed the period of reform. Strictly speaking, this is an arbitrary division, because the great years of the reform were 1856, 1857 and 1860. The laws of 1873 were an echo of the voice of Juárez, who had spoken, as on Sinai, at Veracruz. But 1875 marked the fall of

Tejada, the last of the sincere reformists. After him came Díaz, who initiated a policy all his own, suited to his own ends, and distinct from anything before and after it. We shall next turn to a rapid survey of the political ascendancy of this interesting figure, emphasizing, to meet the ends of this study, his policy with respect to the Church, and the effects which it has had on the present status of the religious conflict in Mexico.

CHAPTER V

Mexico Under the Great Dictator—1876–1910

Attitude and policy of Díaz towards the Church. Revolutions of La Noria and Tuxtepec—their aims. Personality and character of Díaz—ambition the dominant note in his political activity. "Política de conciliación"—meaning of the term—difference between the policy of conciliation of Díaz and that of Comonfort and Maximilian. Non-enforcement of the laws of reform—documentary and circumstantial proof that these laws were never enforced. The revolution of 1910 was not caused by a demand for religious reform—Madero's attitude towards the clergy—the Científicos. Policies of the Catholic Church during the regime of Díaz: On labor; on latifundismo; drink and vice; the feudal system of peonage; on the political system of the dictator; on the gagging of the press; on public education; on economic problems of the nation.

Before the policy of Porfirio Díaz with regard to the Church can be understood a summary of his political biography must be made, his principal motives as a soldier and statesman discovered, and these linked to his policies on the economic, social and religious problems of the country.

Porfirio Díaz had been a soldier ever since the days of the French intervention. He first distinguished himself at the siege of Puebla in 1862. Five years later, after a brilliant campaign in the south, he made the famous attack on the same city, shortly after laying siege to Mexico City. Díaz was one of the liberal leaders who gave the mortal blow to the second empire. He always distinguished himself by his personal courage, his qualities of leadership and an amazing energy in laying and developing his plans.

When Juárez returned to Mexico City in 1867, Díaz was in command of the capital. Already some misunderstanding had cooled the friendship of these two great men and Díaz, after turning over a 100,000 pesos surplus of the national treasury, quietly retired to his hacienda, La Noria, in Oaxaca.

Díaz's one passionate ambition after his victory at Puebla was that of reaching the highest political position in the nation—the presidency. He belonged to that

school of soldiers (which still persists in Mexico) who believe that the nation becomes forever indebted to them for signal services rendered on the battle-field. In fact, so convinced was Díaz that the country owed him this debt, and that it should pay him by raising him to the presidency, that he wrote to the liberal generals who were pressing the siege of Querétaro, proposing to cast lots with them for that high post. This was nothing more than treason to Juárez, who was the legitimate executive. Escobedo, Corona and Régules refused; Díaz would bide his time.

There was one consideration which constantly fed the flames of his ambition. Juárez had been president since 1857, when Comonfort had betrayed the plan of Ayutla. Throughout the ten years of the War of Reform, the intervention, and the second empire, Juárez had succeeded himself in power, exercising a dictatorship in every sense of the word. In 1868, he again succeeded himself, so that, by 1871, he had been in power fourteen years. Obviously, this dictatorship was a national necessity, for, had Juárez made the mistake of relinquishing the command of the liberal forces during the darkest hours of 1869 or 1864-5, his ruin and that of the country would have been sealed.

But Díaz looked on this continuation in power as a tyranny, as oppression. Was not Mexico a democratic republic, that one man should rule for a decade and a half, to the exclusion of other equally worthy citizens, Díaz included?

In 1871, he revolted. Issuing the plan of La Noria, he began the revolution which bears that name under the battle cry of "no re-election". Juárez sent General Rocha against Díaz; the latter was completely defeated at Bufa in March, 1872, being forced to flee into the mountains of Tepic, where he remained in hiding for three years.

In July, 1872, Juárez died. His successor, Lerdo de Tejada, issued an offer of amnesty to all political exiles, and under its protection Díaz returned to the secluded life of his hacienda, La Noria.

With the death of Juárez the excuse of revolt disappeared. But Díaz's ambition was by far the most potent reason for rebellion, so again, in 1875, he plunged the country into a bloody revolution known as that of Tuxtepec. Lerdo de Tejada offered little opposition, and he was soon on his way out of the country. Díaz immediately amended the constitution permitting only one term in the presidency and prohibiting re-election at any future time. Needless to say, Díaz himself succeeded Lerdo de Tejada. He entered into the first year of his long dictatorship in 1876.

The dominant note in Díaz's entire political life was ambition—a desire and a jealousy of power. After entering office he laid his plan of action on two principles—himself perpetuated in command, and peace at any price. The nation must at all costs enter into a period of complete security. Opposing factions must be reconciled, idle hands kept busy, and intractable ones eliminated. The two principles were ideally suited to each other; if the country prospered, it would suffer him to remain as president indefinitely. If material interests grew and multiplied, no one would desire destructive revolts, and he would have a free hand to suppress them. If all shades of political thought were given room in his cabinet, and no laws obnoxious to any one party were passed, law abidance would be a relatively simple thing.

It is interesting to note that both the plans of La Nora and of Tuxtepec proclaimed the constitution and the laws of reform the supreme code of the land. Díaz thereby secured the support of those who believed that the social regeneration of the country was inseparably joined to the enforcement of those laws. But as soon as the second revolt had triumphed and Díaz was in power, he began to appoint conservatives to cabinet posts. The liberals protested but Díaz answered, "The plan of Tuxtepec proclaims expressly that the constitution and the laws of reform are supreme in the land. The revolution was and continues to be liberal and progressive . . . my administration will not be exclusive; I will govern without regard to political parties or divisions".

In this manner was born the famous "política de conciliación" of the Díaz regime. Díaz meant what he said. He would offend no faction of political opinion, he would alienate no single group of men. He would make concessions to all, provided they contributed to his dearest wish—continuation in power.

A few liberals dissented, and refused to co-operate in a policy of compromise with conservatives; but they silently and mysteriously disappeared, never to be heard from again.

Díaz never permitted conscience to enter into affairs of state. His most bland declarations of principle were blinds and decoys for the credulous. In practice he never kept his word unless it suited his own plans. He was accustomed to swearing by the highest ideals before audiences, but in practice he was accustomed to lay those principles aside.

It was not strange, therefore, that what he had promised concerning the laws of reform proved to be a simple pre-election platform. The laws remained on the statute books to appease the liberals, and they simply remained there to soothe the conservatives. It was the "política de conciliación" carried into the sphere that properly belonged to social reform.

In his private life Díaz was equally agile in straddling the fence. Whenever a census was taken, he enrolled himself as a Catholic, although he never entered a church, except on very special occasions, and although he was a thirty-third degree Mason. He feigned enforcement of the reform laws; but whenever a convent was denounced to the authorities, he consented in permitting Mrs. Díaz, a fervent Catholic, to send word to the institution, warning the friars or the nuns of their danger. When the police arrived, they found only a school for homeless children, cared for by a group of charitable ladies.[1]

Much indirect evidence could be adduced to show that the laws of reform were dead letters during the entire rule of Díaz, which lasted thirty-four years. But the

[1]Elevación y Caída de Díaz—Rojas. p. 348.

testimony of persons who are eminently fitted to comment on this point is as convincing as any statistics that could be collected.

On the 16th of August, 1926, the bishops of Mexico presented a memorial to President Calles, requesting the repeal of those portions of the Constitution of 1917 which had to do with religious regulation. Among other things, the bishops said, "The charge has been made against us that we have up to this time failed to protest and to petition against the laws of 1873 and the laws of reform. The principal reason which explains this is that the various governments, for one reason or another, *did not enforce the observance of said laws,* thus creating in practice a *mutual toleration* which should *protect the public peace,* and which gave the Church relative liberty to live and to exercise its rights".[1]

This is Díaz's policy in slightly different words. The unenforcement of the laws established *mutual toleration,* thus insuring the public peace. Peace, peace at any price!

But even more eminent authorities than Bishop Pascual Díaz and Archbishop Mora y del Río have spoken on this subject.

The American bishops and archbishops aired their views on the Mexican religious situation in a ponderous pastoral letter published on December 18, 1926. Touching on the question of the enforcement of the laws involved, the American prelates said:

1. Though the first anti-religious laws of the country date from 1857, *no government till now has ever attempted to give them effect.*

2. "And, second, that though these laws were reaffirmed and made more drastic in the Constitution of 1917, President Carranza himself suggested changing the clauses affecting religion. And President Obregón never attempted to enforce them during the four years of his administration. These two facts show that it was tacitly recognized how far removed such laws were from justice and from the approval of the Mexican people".

[1]Memorial Episcopal, Aug. 16, 1926.

Both the premises and the conclusions of their Eminences are faulty.

It is puerile to say that Juárez did not enforce the laws that he himself fathered because he recognized "how far removed from justice" they were. He did not enforce them because the clerical armies everywhere harried him and kept him a constant fugitive. Lerdo de Tejada enforced them, but only for a brief time, as he was soon overthrown by Díaz. And Díaz did not enforce them because the hyprocisy of his own soul and the ambition which dominated his whole public life were better suited otherwise. Madero, Huerta and Carranza did not enforce them because theirs was a rule through years of anarchy. Obregón did not enforce them because other more pressing problems—recognition by the United States; the agrarian question, labor troubles, the de la Huerta revolt, the economic depression, the controversy with the White House over the oil lands and the American claims—demanded his entire attention and energy.

Only the most complete ignorance of past and contemporary Mexican history could suggest that the reform laws were not enforced because the government tacitly recognized their injustice.

However, the important point here is that the American hierarchy testified that Díaz did not enforce those laws, whatever may have been his reasons.

Under such conditions, then, the Church retained its control on the vast wealth that Juárez had considered such a menace to the peace of the country. The Church furthermore increased its possessions by registering its property under private names. These persons administered loans, mortgages and real estate for the Church, turning over all interests and credits into its coffers.

It would be interesting to conjecture what would have happened if Díaz had enforced the laws. In the first place, the country would not have enjoyed thirty-four years of peace; the Church was too wealthy to permit it. Again, Díaz would have never lasted so long in the presidency. On the other hand, it is probable that the religious conflict today would not have such serious pro-

portions. Calles in fact has to begin precisely where Juárez began more than seventy years ago.

The reign of Porfirio Díaz was a conservative reaction, though neither the Church nor Díaz himself would have admitted it.

As the regime drew to its end the president became less careful to cover his sympathy for the Church. In 1904 the whole republic was the scene of joyous religious feasts occasioned by the anniversary of the Immaculate Conception of Mary. In October of the same year a Catholic congress was held in Michoacán, with the object of discussing the political, social and religious problems of the day.

The following year, after a private agreement between Díaz and President Taft, Mexico agreed to pay the pious fund of the missions of California, $1,420,000 and an annuity of $43,000 as compensation for properties nationalized by the Mexican government.

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What was the Church doing in the meantime to solve the urgent problems of the masses? First, on the question of land monopoly. One of the cancers that was eating away the vitality of the nation was the system of "latifundios" or land monopoly. The most notorious example of this barbarous situation was that of the possessions of the Terrazas, who owned the entire state of Chihuahua. So complete was their control that it became a common joke to ask whether the Terrazas belonged to Chihuahua, or Chihuahua to the Terrazas. Never once did the Church raise its voice against such iniquity. Nor could it very well. The Church itself owned huge tracts of land; and those who, like itself, owned small satrapies and kingdoms, were the most faithful henchmen of Díaz. To speak against the injustice of one man owning two and three million acres of land was to invite the suspicion of the dictator. In the meantime, 90 per cent of the agricultural laborers were owners of not one inch of soil.

The labor problem did not become acute until 1907, when the first labor outbreak took place at Rio Blanco, Veracruz. That does not mean, however, that deplorable

conditions did not exist previously. It was the old, old tale: the disenfranchised classes locked in the wheels of an incipient but arrogant industrialism with all its customary embellishments; long hours, starvation pay, drudgery, smelly holes for habitations, high mortality, vice, and extortion of the laboring masses. A small group of high-pressure enterprisers paid Díaz a modest "contribution" to permit this exploitation, and the Church said nothing. Although it is true that in September of 1904 Bishop Mora y del Río called together a Catholic congress to discuss these problems, all its good resolutions died in committee, or were lulled into sleep by long prayers about social justice. Nowhere did the Church take the open stand for government regulation to improve working conditions, shorten working hours or provide adequate education for the children of laborers. To do so would have been to awaken the helot out of his stupor. We shall see later on what was the social working philosophy of the Church in its National Catholic Workers Congress, held at Guadalajara, in 1922. For the present, the policy of the Church towards the labor problem can be said to be well put by one of its spokesmen, Mariano Alcocer. "The Catholic Church", says Alcocer, "solves the problem of the laborer, in a human and charitable manner, in truth and in justice, taking into account the nature of man, his duties and his rights".

Organized labor has evaluated the contribution of the Church towards solving its problems, and has found it decidedly wanting. In consequence, its philosophy is decidedly positivist and non-traditional. Many incidents of the last decade have revealed the hostility toward the Church among the working classes, born of the negligence of the Church during the long rule of Díaz.

Drink and other forms of vice have always been one of the major problems of Mexican society. But it was not the Church who began an active campaign for temperance. That was left for energetic liberals of the stamp of Aurelio Manrique, ex-governor of San Luis Potosí. The upper class in Mexico has always shown a

criminal indifference towards the ubiquitous "pulque" shop, and the Church contributed strongly to that negligence.

To mention the political problems with regard to Church policy is rather superfluous. Mexico was under a complete dictatorship; its prolongation demanded personal intervention even in the smallest community affairs. The excesses of the local "jefes políticos" ran the gamut of degeneration and corruption. Yet never a complaint, never a protest, never a petition from the high prelates of the hierarchy.

Naturally enough, one corollary to the omnipotent rule of one man is the gagging of the press. In this connection some of the blackest chapters of Mexico's history have been written. Independent journalists in Toluca, Puebla, Monterey and Mexico City were assassinated in their homes, executed in the state prisons, and even cremated in an effort to erase all traces of the crimes. With the press tied and muffled the only other effective means for molding public opinion was the pulpit and the confessional. Hence, the Church maintained a magnificent silence while this indescribable slaughter was going on.

In brief, out of the Church came not one single formula that would mitigate the evils that burdened the nation. The peon in chains, the land monopolized, the press annihilated, drink and gambling running wild, prostitution an open and brazen industry, the country more and more entering under the economic tutelage of the United States; public education in stagnation with illiteracy at more than 80 per cent, and the civic education of a people strangled by the innumerable arms of a dictatorship. Surely, if there was ever a challenge to any institution for the regeneration of a people, here was one. The spokesmen of the Church have the task of showing how it answered that challenge.

The year 1910 was peering over the horizon and relief was nowhere in sight. The octogenarian Díaz had lengthened the presidential term to six years and had named his successor—a nullity called Ramón Corral. The movement to re-elect Díaz for the term of 1910-1916

was fast getting under way by 1909, and among its moving spirits were the most prominent Catholics of that period. Allied to them were the famous Científicos, a group of wealthy business men, lawyers and thinkers, who, next to Díaz, directed the destinies of the republic.

There was one disquieting factor playing an important role in that drama. That factor was Francisco I. Madero, a wealthy agriculturist of Coahuila whose education had given him some vague ideas about democracy and civic justice. Madero early showed opposition to the re-election of Díaz, but he later compromised by asking that Corral be substituted in the vice-presidency by a popularly-elected citizen.

The paper causes of the revolt of 1911 were many; but the chief one was the insistence of Díaz in naming the vice-president. Madero thereupon raised the cry of "Effective suffrage; no re-election", and around him gathered all who had any accounts pending with Díaz.

What part did the religious question play in beginning one of Mexico's bloodiest strifes? A very insignificant one indeed.

Madero had written a book called "The Presidential Succession in 1910", which was an analysis of Díaz's rule and the evils it had sheltered. The clergy were mentioned incidentally three or four times, and then not in the critical manner which they deserved. In point of fact, Madero applauded the "policy of conciliation" which has been described above. He said somewhere in his book, "In as much as General Díaz has been concerned chiefly with avoiding any opposition to his personal policies, he has been exceedingly tolerant in questions of principle . . . having used the 'policy of conciliation' with the clergy, and obtaining thereby very good results in destroying old hatreds and enmities". Elsewhere he added, "The clergy has progressed a great deal since the War of Reform, as it has gained in virtue what it has lost in riches. Besides, the secular clergy has always been a partisan of the people; it is the regular clergy that has always tended to domination . . . We must not, therefore, fear the influence of the clergy, much the less

attempt to obstruct its activity, provided it is always legitimate".[1] Madero never specified what he thought such legitimate activity should be.

The Church, like Díaz, was inclined to consider Madero as a noisy but harmless idealist. Madero's physique contributed somewhat to this. During an interview with Díaz the great soldier smiled complacently on this little black-bearded man of scarce five feet plus, who spoke about "votes," "popular sovereignty," and like abstractions. Judging from what Madero himself said about the Church, the latter had nothing to fear from him. In fact, when he was imprisoned in San Luis Potosí on the charge of sedition, the bishop of that dioces, Don Ignacio Montes de Oca, personally interceded for him and secured his release.

Summarizing, the prolonged rule of Díaz was characterized, with respect to the question of the Church, by the most complete negligence in the enforcement of the laws of reform. Under the complacent indifference of the president, the Church increased its possessions and tightened its grip on its special rights, and control of education. Its policy toward the great problems of the country was one of silence, or one of casuistic platitudes at best. And when Madero appeared on the scene, it feared nothing; for the "apostle" showed that he completely ignored or feigned ignorance of the basic ills of Mexican society. "During the Díaz regime the Catholic clergy constituted the most reliable support of the dictatorship", says one contemporary.

But the revolt, which at first held no dangers for the Church, soon got beyond control. From the hands of Madero it passed to others, more intrepid and more vigorous, guided by more lucid minds. How the storm gathered, burst, and flooded even the most recondite corners of the ecclesiastical stronghold, is the story of the next chapter.

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[1]Succesión Presidencial en 1910—Madero. p. 39.

CHAPTER VI

Revolt and the New Reform—1910–1927

Madero begins the revolt. Political events up to the exile of Huerta. Huerta and the Catholic party—Huerta a representative of the return to dictatorship and conservatism. Carranza—his attitude towards the Church—Political events. The years of anarchy: confiscation of church property, exile and death of priests. The Constitution of 1917. Obregón and Calles—Law enforcement. Ten years of quiescence—the storm gathers. February 5, 1926—Archbishop José Mora y del Río—statements which he made to the press in Mexico City. Calles answers—Article 130 of the Constitution regulated—significance of this in Mexican law—August 1, 1926. The religious conflict since August 1st, documents and public papers of importance and interest. Catholic strategy during this period. The economic boycott. Propaganda. Armed revolt. Passive resistance by means of widespread organization in all Catholic circles. The Knights of Columbus and the League of Religious Liberty. The attitude of organized labor towards the Church—the debates of the Teatro Iris—demonstration and manifesto of August 1st. The conflict with the Church purely domestic in character. Statements of the American Knights of Columbus—circular letter of September 15, 1926. Pastoral letter of the American archbishops published December 18, 1926. Attitude of American Protestants.

The revolution of 1911, as we have seen, was caused least of all by a demand for religious reform. The desire to breathe life into the inert laws of reform was far removed from Madero, who aimed his attack on Díaz purely on the grounds of political emancipation and civic freedom. "Effective suffrage, no re-election" was the rallying-cry of the rebellion.

Hostilities broke out in February, 1911, four months after the time which had been set by the leader. Already in Puebla there had occurred the bloody tragedy involving Aquiles Serdán, a co-worker of Madero. Díaz persisted in refusing to consider the threat as serious. He permitted the revolt to assume large proportions in the north, until the revolutionists were strong enough to take Ciudad Juárez. The news of this feat electrified the discontented everywhere. With astonishing rapidity volunteers poured in from all directions; battle after battle was decided in favor of Madero, and finally, on the 25th of May, 1911, Díaz resigned from the presidency, together with the vice-president of his choice, Ramón Cor-

ral. A few days later Díaz sailed for Europe, never to return.

The country acclaimed Madero as the apostle, the redeemer. Public delirium reached an uncontrollable pitch, culminating with the reception of the leader in Mexico City, on July 7, 1911. De la Barra was elected president pro tem, until the election could be held. Madero, naturally enough, was elected.

The new president had not been in office long before he showed his ineptitude to govern. He had no definite policy. He proceeded to slight his closest followers by appointing conservative leaders to his cabinet. The most contrary advice increased his natural indecision, and time after time he made serious steps with nothing more than his own impetuosity to account for them. He had permitted a national Catholic party to participate in the elections of 1911, thereby making himself suspicious to the left. His enemies did not fail to point out the shameless nepotism which Madero practiced, placing his uncles, brothers and near relatives in lucrative and influential positions. All in all, the discontent grew within the first year to serious proportions, and the kindness, the generosity, and the idealism of the apostle were unable to serve him in his hour of need.

Early in 1913 Madero already found himself in imminent danger. Félix Díaz, nephew of the dictator, was an aspirant to the presidency, as was also Bernardo Reyes, a soldier of great reputation. These two slowly and secretely undermined the already unstable popularity of Madero, and on February 10, 1913, delivered the blow that has passed into history as the "Decena Trágica" or "the tragedy of ten days".

In the early hours of that fateful morning the national palace was attacked. The conspirators were repulsed, retiring thereupon to the Ciudadela, a building constructed like a formidable fortress, in the southwest section of the city. Around this edifice raged the battle of ten days, which laid waste whole sections of the city and cost hundreds of lives of non-combatants.

Madero had hastily summoned General Victoriano

Huerta to Mexico City, making him commander-in-chief of all the federal forces, thus placing in him unlimited faith and unrestricted power. The rebels under Félix Díaz were holding the government in an impasse. There was seemingly no solution to the struggle except that of treason, and to this the sinister Huerta readily gave himself. He joined the conspirators, imprisoned Madero and Pino Suárez in the national palace, and on the night of February 22, 1913, assassinated them in cold blood outside the state penitentiary.

Huerta named himself provisional president. That Huerta was openly supported by the Catholic party is a well-known fact. Out of his cabinet came the second candidate of the national Catholic party. Huerta had the brazenness to justify the murder of Madero in the name of God before the chamber of deputies; and the men who surrounded him were all luke warm or fiery conservatives. The president was an avowed believer in dictatorship, and proposed to return to the happy days of "porfirismo" as Díaz's regime was called. Had he succeeded in maintaining himself in power, such would have been his policy. But he enjoyed too brief a respite, for in the north loomed the shadow of his Nemesis, personified in Venustiano Carranza, governor of Coahuila.

Venustiano Carranza never recognized Huerta. When the latter sent a telegram telling of the imprisonment of Madero and asking for recognition, Carranza answered by a complete negation, and disposed himself to take up arms. Such was the beginning of the "constitutional revolution" whose effects the clergy was soon to feel.

The years 1913 to 1916 were years of anarchy. Even after Huerta had been driven into exile, the country remained under the tutelage of terrorists like Zapata, Villa and Orozco. Communications were cut off everywhere, industry was paralyzed, and foreigners were kidnapped or killed indiscriminately. Even after Carranza had entered Mexico City in 1915 and had introduced some semblance of order into his government, the fighting continued. Villa broke with him in the north and Zapata

harrassed him continuously in the east. It was during this reign of terror that the most salient men of present-day politics first came into the public light; Obregón, Calles, Cabrera, González, Saenz and Morones.

In enquiring how the Church fared during these turbulent times, we must first of all recognize that the Church was subject to the uncertainties of the times. Its property was destroyed, its ministers injured or killed, its goods confiscated primarily because irresponsible men were everywhere destroying, killing and sacking. From 1911 to 1916 the Church passed along a veritable via dolorosa, not because any government was carrying on a systematic persecution, but because the unchained passions of men were overwhelming everything in their path.

But if Carranza was unable to carry out a systematic policy with respect to the Church, it was due simply to the fact that he was not in military control of the entire country. We can briefly discuss what Carranza's ideas were on the question of the Church, and what policy he followed, if any, toward it.

An insight into this policy is given by Aguirre Berlanga, secretary in Carranza's cabinet. Says Berlanga in his small volume, "The Legal Genesis of the Constitutional Revolution": "Carranza did not specifically mention the clergy in his plan of Guadalupe. To have done so would have united the opposition against him. The clergy, forgetting its real mission, was aiding the traitor (Huerta); nothing was said concerning the punishment for such procedure, but such was quietly administered slowly but surely, and would be entirely rigorous when victory should come".

The policy was then, to say nothing but to turn the thumb-screws as the constitutional troops gained ground. And such was in effect, the procedure. Throughout the republic the instances of confiscation, of deportations of priests, the closing of churches, etc., multiplied rapidly. In Sonora was this especially fierce, where the clergy found no place to lay their heads, so tenacious was Obregón in his purpose.

It was not until late in 1914 that the first enunciation of principle on religious policy was pronounced by Carranza. In December of that year he published a decree at Veracruz, saying, among other things, that he proposed to impose such measures as would guarantee strict compliance with the laws of reform.

Carranza's polices took form gradually during the years of anarchy, but that is not to say that he did not have a previous notion of the nation's greatest problems. As governor of Coahuila he had repeatedly enunciated new doctrines respecting the land problem, the administration of justice, municipal government and taxation. It is reasonable to suppose that he had definite ideas with respect to the Church, but refrained from expressing them, knowing that to do so in the days when his revolt was in its infancy would have been to precipitate a most powerful enemy against him. Once having reached the commanding military position in the county, he began to expound his political and social theories and to put them into practice.

At first Carranza's reforms assumed the aspects of purely dictatorial measures. His decrees were enforced wherever his forces were quartered, with the result that the opposition attacked him bitterly on the ground that such reforms were backed by no legal constitutional authority. So insistent became this complaint, and so plausible was it made to appear, that Carranza began to see the necessity of a new constitution wherein might be expressed the principles which he had been practicing piece meal. As early as 1915 Carranza began to lay the groundwork for the new charter, issuing decrees, manifestos and laws which indicated clearly what the character of the new constitution would be.

The Constituent assembly met in Querétaro during the latter part of 1916. Its components were, of course, not the chosen representatives of the country. They were the men who had followed Carranza, had fought his battles, had defeated Huerta, and now had come together to try their hand at statesmanship.

The constitution promulgated on February 5, 1917,

contains the precepts which constitute the battleground of the present Church-State conflict in Mexico. Nothing new was added to the laws of reform, but these were reiterated, with such a profusion of detail that the Constitution of 1857 seems mild when compared to its successor. Following are all the sections of the Constitution of 1917 which are in any way related to the Church:

"Art. 3. Instruction is free; that given in public institutions of learning shall be secular; primary instruction, whether higher or lower, given in private institutions shall be likewise secular.

"No religious corporation, no minister of any religious creed shall establish or direct schools of primary instructions.

"Private primary schools may be established only subject to official supervision.

"Primary instruction in public institutions shall be gratuitous.

"Art. 5. Par. III. The state shall not permit any contract, covenant or agreement to be carried out having for its object the abridgment, loss or irrevocable sacrifice of the liberty of man, whether by reason of labor, education or religious vows. The law, therefore does not permit the establishment of monastic orders, of whatever denomination, or for whatever purpose contemplated.

"Art. 13. Par. I. No one shall be tried by private laws or by special tribunals. No person or corporation shall have privileges nor enjoy emoluments which are not in compensation for public services and established by law. . . .

"Art. 24. Every one is free to embrace the religion of his choice and to practice the ceremonies, devotions or observances of his respective creed, either in places of worship or at home, provided they do not constitute an offense punishable by law.

"Every religious act of public worship shall be performed strictly within the places of public worship, which shall be at all times under governmental supervision.

"Art. 27. Par. II. The religious institutions known as churches, irrespective of creed, shall in no case have

legal capacity to acquire, hold or administer real property or loans as may be held at present by said religious institutions either on their own behalf or through third parties, shall vest in the nation, and any one shall have the right to denounce property so held . . . Places of public worship are the property of the nation, as represented by the federal government, who shall determine which of them may continue to be devoted to their present purposes. Episcopal residences, rectories, seminaries, orphan asylums or collegiate establishments of religious institutions, convents or any other buildings built or designed for the administration, propoganda or teaching of any religious creed shall forthwith vest, as of full right, directly in the nation, to be used exclusively for the public services of the federation or of the states, within their respective jurisdictions. All places of public worship which shall later be erected shall be the property of the nation.

"Par. III. Public and private charitable institutions for the sick and needy, for scientific research, or for the diffusion of knowledge, mutual aid societies or organizations formed for any other lawful purpose shall in no case acquire, hold or administer loans made on real property, unless the mortgage terms do not exceed ten years. In no case shall institutions of this character be under the patronage, direction or administration, charge or supervision of religious corporations or institutions, nor of ministers of any religious creeds or their dependents, even though the former or the latter shall not be in active service.

"Art. 37. Citizenship shall be lost . . .

"Par. III. By compromising themselves in any way before the ministers or any religious creed or before any other person not to observe the present constitution, or the laws arising thereunder.

"Art. 130. . . . The congress shall not enact any law establishing or forbidding any religion whatsoever.

"Marriage is a civil contract. Marriage and all other acts relating to the civil status of individuals shall appertain to the exclusive jurisdiction of the civil authorities. . . .

"The law recognizes no juridical personality in the religious institutions known as churches.

"Ministers of a religious creed shall be considered as persons exercising a profession, and shall be directly subject to the laws enacted on the matter.

"The state legislatures shall have the exclusive power of determining the maximum number of ministers of religious creeds, according to the needs of each locality. Only a Mexican by birth may be a minister of any religious creed in Mexico.

"No ministers of religious creeds shall, either in public or private meetings, or in acts of worship or religious propaganda, criticize the fundamental laws of the country, the authorities in particular or the government in general; they shall have no vote, nor be eligible to office, nor shall they be entitled to assemble for political purposes.

"Before dedicating new temples of worship for public use, permission shall be obtained from the department of the interior; the opinion of the governor of the respective state shall previously be heard on the subject. Every place of worship shall have a person charged with its care and maintenance, who shall be legally responsible for the faithful performance of the laws on religious observances within the said place of worship, and for all the objects used for the purpose of worship.

"The caretaker of each place of public worship, together with ten citizens of the place, shall promptly advise the municipal authorities as to the persons charged with the care of said place of worship. The outgoing minister shall in every instance give notice of any change for which purpose he shall be accompanied by the incoming minister and ten other citizens of the place. The municipal authorities, under pain of dismissal and fine, not exceeding 1000 pesos for each breach, shall be responsible for the exact performance of this provision. . . .

"Under no condition shall studies carried on in institutions devoted to the professional training of ministers of religious creeds be given credit or granted any

other dispensation of privilege which shall have for its purpose the accrediting of said studies in official institutions. Any violation of this provision shall be punished criminally, and all such dispensation shall be null and void and shall invalidate wholly and entirely the professional degree toward the obtaining of which the infraction of this provision may in any way have contributed.

"No periodical publication which either by reason of its program, its title or merely its general tendencies, is of a religious character, shall comment upon any political affairs of the nation, nor publish any information regarding the acts of the authorities of the country or of private individuals insofar as the latter have to do with public affairs.

"Every kind of political association whose name shall bear any word or any indication relating to any religious belief is hereby strictly forbidden. No assemblies of any political character shall be held with places of public worship.

"No minister of any religious creed may inherit, either on his own behalf or by means of a trustee or otherwise, any real property occupied by any association of religious propaganda or religious or charitable purposes. Ministers of religious creeds are incapable legally of inheriting by will from ministers of the same religious creed or from private individuals to whom they are not related by blood within the fourth degree.

"All real and personal property pertaining to the clergy or to religious institutions shall be governed, in so far as their acquisition by private parties is concerned, in conformity with Art. 27 of this constitution.

"No trial by jury shall ever be granted for the infraction of any of the preceding provisions."

The mere enunciation of these principles did not, of course, have any effect upon the conditions which they aimed to remedy. According to Mexican usage, a constitutional provision as such has no effect until a "regulatory" law is passed. That is, these provisions which deal with the Church were only so much ink on paper

until a "ley reglamentaria" or regulatory law was passed enforcing those provisions.

The regulatory law enforcing the articles which have been transcribed was not passed until November 24, 1926. The project of law was submitted by President Calles to the chambers on October 27, 1926. There is, consequently, a lapse of ten years between the promulgation of the constitution and the enactment of the religious regulatory laws. How is this explained?

Elsewhere it has been pointed out that the religious problem was not the only one which confronted Carranza and his successors. Carranza's most important obstacle was the military opposition which harried him almost during his entire administration. He was furthermore on precarious relations with the United States, then strained by the aftermath of Columbus, Veracruz, the Pershing punitive expedition and the Santa Isabel cases. Obregón's biggest problem was the economic, and later the domestic political, represented by the de la Huerta revolt. Calles himself inherited the international controversy, the agrarian problem, the domestic chaos and the economic disorganization incident upon fifteen years of revolution. So far as the executives were concerned, the religious problem continued in all its importance, but for the time being it must abide a more opportune time for its solution according to the constitutional program.

The years intervening between February, 1917, and February, 1926, represented a period of quiescence so far as the religious problem was concerned. But, suddenly on the 5th of February of the latter year, the storm clouds gathered, bringing the church question to a critical stage. With this date the contemporary aspects of this problem begin, and it is about these last developments that the rest of this study is concerned.

§

The 5th of February, 1926, was the ninth anniversary of the promulgation of the 1917 Constitution. Up to that date no regulatory law had been so much as discussed as concerned the religious question. But Archbishop Mora y del Río, head of the Mexican hierarchy,

published in "El Universal" a daily of Mexico City, the following statement: "The doctrine of the Church is invariable because truth is divinely revealed. The protest which the prelates of the Mexican Church made in 1917 against the constitutional articles that are opposed to religious liberty is firmly reiterated. It has not been modified; it has been strengthened, because it is in accordance with the doctrine of the Church. The information published in 'El Universal' on the 27th of January, with reference to the campaign which will be undertaken against these unjust laws which are so contrary to natural right, is perfectly accurate. We, the episcopate, the clergy and the Catholics, do not recognize Articles 3, 5, 27 and 130 of the present constitution, but rather we will combat them. Under no circumstances can we abandon this criterion without treason to our faith and to our religion. (Signed) José, Archbishop of Mexico".

The protest of 1917 to which the archbishop refers was published in that year by the clergy and reprinted in "El Universal" on February 8, 1926. It reads as follows:

"The Code of 1917 attacks the sacred rites of the Catholic Church, of Mexican society and the individual rights of Christians, proclaims principles opposed to the truths taught by Jesus Christ, which constitute the treasure of the Church and the chief inheritance of humanity; it takes away the few rights which the Constitution of 1857 (admitted by all Mexicans as the fundamental law) recognized in favor of the Church as a society, and of Catholics as individuals.

"We do not pretend to mix in political controversy, but we do defend, in the only way which is open, the religious liberty of Christian people, in view of this rude attack aimed at religion. We limit ourselves to energetic and decorus protest against that attack, but not without prefixing to that protest the following formal declarations:

"1. In conformity with the doctrines of the Roman pontiffs and especially those contained in the Encyclical 'Quod Apostolici numens', and moved by our patriotism,

we do not approve of armed rebellion against constituted authority; this passive submission, however, is not to be mistaken for intellectual and voluntary approval of the anti-religious or otherwise unjust laws that emanate from it (the constitution), nor that it shall be pretended that by assuming this attitude, the Catholics, our faithful, deprive themselves of their rights as citizens to work legally and peacefully to erase from the national laws whatever injures their conscience and their rights.

"2. That in proceeding thus, we are not impelled by the least motive of revenge, nor even the natural desire to procure our own well being, and that of our clergy (which could be easily secured by our silence or by compromise), our only motive being to comply with the duty that the defense of religious liberty and the rights of the Church impose upon us.

"We protest against the tendencies of the Constituent Congress of 1917, which destroy religion, culture, and traditions. . . .

"Section 4 of Article 130 asserts that the churches have no juridical status. It cannot be denied that, even if the Church were not of divine origin, and had not received from its divine founder the personality and character of a true society, it would nevertheless have, independent of any civil authority, a proper and personal character, born of the individual right to religious belief and the practice of worship; and because that right precedes the existence of the state and consequently does not depend upon it, any violation against the group becomes a violation and an attack against individual right.

"Freedom of instruction is attacked (Articles 3 and 30) as is the right of parents to educate their children in accord with their conscience and their religion. . . .

"We protest against Article 5 because it impedes the practice of the religious life, limits the freedom of association for such an honest purpose as the exercise of public charity, and restricts the right of all men to live in conformity with the dictates of conscience.

"With reference to Section 11 of Article 27, what religious society can fulfill its mission without the right

of even possessing the most indispensable properties and goods to answer its needs? Is it not chaining religion to deny it the privileges of owning colleges to educate its followers, asylums for its needy, hospitals for its sick, and means of providing for the maintenance and decorum of its ministers? Is not the act of impeding religious action equivalent to a violation of the individual right to practice religious belief freely? By what authority outside that of tyranny can the state decree such spoliation?

"The church building, to the Catholic, is the house of God. The Catholic churches in Mexico, as all over the world, are the property of Catholic societies because they constructed them or because they are the legitimate gifts of those who built them. We protest, therefore, against this double spoliation . . . which takes from Catholics their churches and the right to acquire possession of new ones, and we likewise protest against the violation of religious liberty which this implies.

"Article 130 contains so many obstacles and limitations that religious liberty becomes an illusion . . . Is it not an ignominious exclusion which is imposed upon the clergy? If not, then why are not the other professions restricted in point of number or with respect to nationality, as is the clergy?

"In view of these things, we protest against the attacks on religious liberty and on the rights of the Church, and we hereby declare that we will not recognize any act or declaration, even though it emanate from a person of ecclesiastical dignity, if it is contrary to these statements and protests".[1]

This statement was signed by Archbishop Mora y del Río, the archbishops of Michoacán, Yucatán, Linares and Antequera, and all the bishops of the republic.

These two documents are of vital importance in understanding the Mexican religious controversy. They contain the heart of the Catholic case and represent the boldest protests that the clergy has yet made.

Analyzing the statement made by the archbishop on February 5, it is evident that the clergy insists on recog-

[1]Cuestión religiosa en México—Lugo. p. 370.

nizing at all costs the supremacy of pontifical law over national constitutional law. The campaign to which reference was made remained unspecified, and opened the matter to all manner of speculation. It was an open avowal of hostility to the supreme law of the land couched in such terms as implied definite and bellicose measures.

The protest of the clergy quoted above left their position very equivocal. They did not sanction armed rebellion against the constituted authority, but in no case has the clergy used its powerful means, such as excommunication, interdict, etc., to prevent such armed rebellion by men who have been and still are openly combatting for "Religión y Fueros". It would not be contrary to precedent, as during the War of Independence these measures were frequently and copiously used against the "disturbers of the public peace". If the Church is not fomenting armed rebellion, it has certainly taken no steps to discourage it.

The last paragraph of the protest is indicative of the attitude of the clergy toward all civil authority. When they said that they will not recognize any act or declaration *even though* it emanate from a person of ecclesiastical dignity (investiture) if it be contrary to these statements . . .", etc., the prelates implied that civil authority was invariably relegated to second place in favor of ecclesiastical authority; and if the latter could be ignored much more reason to ignore and even "combat" the former.

It would be illuminating to know what determined the statement of February 5 by the archbishop. Had the Church actually been laying a plan of campaign during nine years, which it judged opportune to initiate them? The difficulties of Calles's administration just at that period give this probability more than speculative value. Did the archbishop have notice of the intention of the government to enact immediately regulatory laws on religious matters, and thought thereby to steal a march on Calles by this statement? If so, he succeeded in penetrating what to the rest of the world was a complete

secret; to date no documents have come to light showing that such an intention existed. Furthermore, the archbishop's words and action had all the characteristics of a badly veiled threat, and the reaction, by reason of the temperament of the men in power and the circumstances which prevailed, could not have been other than it was. One thing is certain: the clergy were convinced that the laws of reform, as expressed in the Constitution of 1917, were not going to rest indefinitely on the statute books as they did during the regime of Díaz. Had they believed this, the statement of February 5 would have never seen light.

The repeated protests of the clergy such as have been transcribed could not have been ignored by Calles without inviting serious consequences to his administration. The declarations of the clergy were frank avowals to combat and disobey the constitution which he was bound to enforce. It was a challenge which he could ill afford to pass by, first, because of the weakness it would have revealed, and, second, because any movement headed by the clergy was bound to gain impetus in brief space of time.

The first official answer to the hierarchy came in the form of a statement given by Adalberto Tejeda, secretary of the interior (Gobernación). A few days after the publication of Archbishop Mora y del Río's statement, Sr. Tejeda said: "The department of the interior has observed with interest the statements which the archbishop, Sr. Mora y del Río, has published in the press of this city; and, given their tone and general tenor, believes that the attitude assumed by the archbishop represents a revolt against the fundamental laws and institutions of the republic.

"The state permits the Catholic Church to exercise its functions up to the point where they do not constitute an obstacle to the progress and development of the people; but it cannot and may not tolerate that its constitutional laws be 'ignored and attacked', as is evidenced by the statements in question.

"The government is obliged to enforce respect for

the postulates of its laws, and must therefore take steps against those who would infringe them.

"Steps have been taken by this department to place the facts before the attorney general and the president of the republic . . . with the aim of taking such measures as may be required by the activities . . . of a group of Catholics whose tactics have placed them in the role of conspirators against the established order".[1]

But the official answer to the clerical challenge, and the one which precipitated the issue, was the adoption of the law which regulates (or enforces) Article 130 of the constitution. The project of the law was sent to the Congress on October 27, 1926, by President Calles; it was adopted intact by that body on November 24. Be it noted, however, that the project in question became a law on August 1, 1926, by virtue of presidential decree. The action of the congress was merely one of confirmation. By November, 1926, the law had been in effect for four months.

The regulatory law of August 1st follows very closely the text of Article 130 of the constitution. It designates the responsibilities of the persons in charge of the churches; places these under national ownership; denies juridical personality to the churches, as well as the usages and procedure of hiearchical organization; imposes fines on persons who conceal church property; restricts the right of ministers to criticize the laws and authorites, to vote and to hold office as well as to inherit property; prescribes the forms of inventories to be kept of church properties, the changes in personnel, the nationality of the priests. In brief, it includes all the dispositions found in Article 130, and adds only the following:

"In the cases of contracts referring to the civil status, the ministers of cults may perform the ceremonies which their religion or sect prescribes for the acts of a given nature, after the stipulations of the laws have been complied with; in every case the interested parties shall present the certificate or certificates which prove that the

[1]Cuestión religiosa en México—Lugo. p. 372.

requirements of the law have been fulfilled. The law furthermore grants a period of six years to the churches whose congregations are composed of foreigners, during which time they are required to train Mexican-born persons for the ministry of the cult. At the expiration of this period, the requirement of Mexican nationality will be enforced with respect to ministers of foreign congregations".

The presidential decree regulating Article 130 was to go into effect on August 1, 1926. On that day the priests and ministers of all cults would either comply with its requirements or suffer the heavy penalties of the law. The event was in every respect a "show-down".

The clergy could not comply and yet be consistent with its attitude towards the laws of reform; to do so would have been a complete victory for the government.

Pressed into action by the impending crisis, the Mexican clergy issued its famous pastoral letter of July 25, 1926, in which it expressed its opinion of the decree and the conduct of the Church with respect to it. The letter said in part, "Who will deny that to make acts of the worship of God crimes is an unparalleled injury to the Church, which attacks divine right, natural right and the dearest interests of the Mexican nation?"

"The decrees and laws are so far removed from order and reason, and are so oblivious of the common good that they do not even merit the name of laws. From 1917 to the recent months our conduct has been one of prudent silence because the anti-religious articles of the constitution were not enforced to the point of making the life of the Church impossible. We were able to maintain an expectant attitude, tolerating excesses, always protecting the principles of the divine constitution of the Church.

"But the decree of July 2 of this year attacks the rights of the Church in such a way . . . that it would be criminal for us to tolerate such a condition.

"In view of the impossibility of continuing to exercise our sacred ministry under the conditions imposed by the decree, and after having consulted our holy father,

Pious XI, and having obtained his consent, we command that after the 31st of July of the present year, and continuing until further order from us, all worship which requires the services of the priests shall be suspended.

"Be assured, beloved children, that we are not imposing upon you the grave penalties of interdict, but we are simply employing the only means we have to demonstrate our non-conformity with the articles of the constitution.

"In order to permit the faithful to continue in prayer, the churches will remain open.

"We exhort the fathers and mothers to prevent their children from going to educational institutions where their faith and good customs may be endangered and where text books violate the neutrality of religion".[1]

The pastoral letter closes with a list of the penalties that will be imposed on those who fail to aid the Church in its present trouble, who denounce church property, etc., etc.

The papal consent of which the letter speaks had been granted in an Encyclical dated July 14. In it Pious XI expressed the sentiment that . . . "We are assured that if you attend the instructions we have given you, you will eventually, with the help of God, overcome the obstacles that surround you . . . and we can do no other than to stimulate you in the struggle for the defense of the faith, which is so gravely menaced".

The prelates were careful to state that they were not imposing the grave penalties of interdict, but to all outward appearances it does exist. The saints in the Churches are draped in mourning robes, the altars are somber and silent, black bows and ribbons hang from doorways and windows, baptismal fonts are closed and the bells are silent. Men wear narrow stripes of black cloth on their lapels and women dress in the severe black dress, hose and veil prescribed by Catholic usage for mourning.

August 1st marked the beginning of a much heralded economic boycott sponsored by the Liga de Resistancia,

[1]Cuestión religiosa en México—Uroz. p. 148.

a Catholic organization. The high ecclesiastical authorities exhorted Catholics everywhere to curtail consumption in every possible way, beginning with articles of luxury and even limiting themselves in foods and other prime necessities. Moving pictures, theatres, concerts, dances and all forms of diversion were tabooed; even riding in street cars and buses was discouraged. The economic boycott was launched as an auxiliary to the religious strike, and intended to bring pressure on Calles.

The last days of July were tense with expectation. The government, on its part, made preparations to enforce Article 130 to its full extent. The preparations were not without a smack of military maneuvers; troops were concentrated and held in readiness. An army of government agents everywhere kept close watch of the movements of hierarchical leaders and prominent lay Catholics.

The Church made dispositions to obey the pastoral letter which has been quoted. Priests everywhere were working feverishly, baptising thousands of infants, confessing, marrying, holding communion and administering to the mobs that stormed the temples. The archbishop of Mexico fainted from exhaustion after ministering continuously on July 31st. The faithful kneeled in great numbers outside the churches and received the blessing of the retiring priests.

The disquieting rumors of rebellion on a huge scale failed to materialize on August 1st. Many minor encounters were registered throughout the country, often times resulting in bloodshed, but there was no general movement of revolt.

After the first days of excitement, both sides settled down to their respective courses: the government to enforce strictly the provisions against the priests, to take possession of the temples, to list all church properties, and to keep a vigilant eye on all prelates; the Church, to watch and wait, as it always has done, to threaten and to plead alternately, and to organize its spiritual and material forces in prospect of a long and bitter struggle. The country was flooded with small printed bills bearing epi-

grams written in the most caustic style. These, together with handbills bearing the clerical war-cry "Viva Cristo Rey" were pasted on street corners, windows, automobile tires, show cases and even on articles for public sale. All of this, of course, was done under cover.

Sixteen days after the initiation of the boycott the clergy addressed a petition to President Calles, asking for the suspension of Article 130, until some permanent arrangement could be made between the Church and the state to solve the problem. The prelates defended themselves from the charge that the suspension of services constituted treason, saying that the failure to exercise a right could in no case be construed as an injury to society. They defended the boycott, saying that it was purely a pacific measure, with no pretensions of stirring up trouble. "The fundamental point of departure is . . . the sincere independence of the Church and the State", said the petition. "All we ask are the following liberties, to which we have a right as Christians, as citizens of a civilized nation and as free men: freedom of conscience, of thought, of worship, of instruction, of association, and of the press. In a word, we ask for the acknowledgment of that juridical personality which is indispensable to make these liberties effective".

The answer of the president was as prompt as it was unequivocal. First of all, he made it clear that he was the least logical authority to whom appeals for suspending the article in question might be addressed, in as much as his personal convictions were entirely in sympathy with the postulates of the constitution. He next indicated that the prelates might petition the congress, which has an equal power of suspending laws or initiating new ones. He next made it plain that the government had not considered it "an act of rebellion" to suspend religious services, but that such qualification was given to acts of open rebellion and of open hostility to the constitution in an attempt to amend it in ways not indicated by the charter itself. Calles made an energetic defense of Obregón for not having enforced the religious clauses, pointing out what has already been said above: that such lack of

enforcement was due to the existence of many other grave problems claiming immediate attention. The letter was, in brief, a complete denial in every point of the petition of the episcopate, and closed definitely that avenue as a means of conciliation or compromise.

A few days later, Calles made the following statement, "Naturally, my government does not intend to relax the reform and additions to the Penal Code (Article 130) and each new manifestation of animosity or opposition to the administrative policy of my government will inevitably result in new measures of repression of those who do not abide by the laws of Mexico.

"The bishops maintain that the boycott is a peaceful measure, but if that measure had an effective influence on the country, what would be the result? Rebellion, armed tumults and the general unhinging of all economic activity in the country".

Having failed to make headway through the president, the bishops followed his suggestion and petitioned the federal congress. This petition was submitted on September 6, 1926, to the chamber of deputies. Its importance at present rests chiefly on the fact that it is the last official petition of the clergy to date, and as such merits lengthy quotation.

That document, in its most important points, reads as follows:

"In exercise of the right of petition, guaranteed by Article 8 of the constitution and attentive to the invitation given us by the president of the republic to that effect, we come to demand, in the name of the Catholic Mexican people, the repeal of some of the articles of the present constitution, and the reform of others, with the patriotic purpose of putting an end to the religious conflict; of obtaining for Mexican Catholics the liberty of their Church; of purging the constitution of unjust and contradictory precepts which, on the one hand ignore the reality of the religious conditions of our country, and, on the other, limit and restrict religion with norms of slavery, and, finally, of harmonizing the Law of Mexico with the postulates of civilization".

After quoting Leo XIII on some fine points of procedure, the memorial continues:

"What do we ask? We neither ask for toleration nor for complacence; neither for prerogatives or favors. All we ask for is liberty for all religions.

"Modern society is founded upon liberty; for the sake of liberty many institutions have been destroyed and much blood has been spilt; any regime which opposes all religion would be a negation of liberty.

"Respect for the Church is sufficiently justified by the fact that it maintains itself within its limits. And those limits were outlined by Jesus Christ himself on two memorable occasions. When He was asked concerning the tax, He answered, 'Render unto Ceasar the things that are Ceasar's and unto God the things that are God's'; and again,, when two youths approached him, and one said to him, 'Master, command my brother to share with me our inheritance', Jesus answered, asking who had been set up on earth to judge over them . . .

"This and no other is the attitude of the Church before the state. The civil society has the right to dictate laws, in its domain, without intervening in things religious, and without invading the spiritual sphere . . .

"Our petitions are reduced to one thing; to secure religious liberty, which comprises the following: freedom of instruction . . ., freedom of association . . .; freedom of worship . . . ; and the freedom of possessing even if it be only the most indispensable objects for carrying on religious ends . . .

"That these reforms are a national necessity is revealed by the initiatives of Venustiano Carranza, who proposed to modify Articles 3 and 130. . . .

"How much less could we ask of Article 3 than a sincere freedom of instruction? There are nations like Belgium, Holland, England and others where the state sustains the schools without distinction of creed. All that we ask is the freedom to open our schools, sustained by Catholics".

After pointing out that the Church does not oppose social development, that all that is sought is the freedom

of the Church, that philosophy and civilization sanction the aims of the petition, and of the ideal harmony that should exist between the law of God and the laws of men, the memorial passes to the concrete suggestions on the reform and repeal of the constitutional articles in question:

"Article 3. Instruction is free. That imparted in official schools shall be subject to the requirements fixed by law. L

"Article 5. The state may not permit any contract, pact or agreement to be carried out having for its object the abridgment, loss or irrevocable sacrifice of the liberty of man, whether by reason of labor or education, nor can it establish any sanction, civil or penal, to compel the observance of religious vows.

"Article 24. All men are free to profess the religious belief of their choice and to practice the ceremonies, devotions or other acts of the cult, in the churches or in private homes, provided these acts do not constitute an offense punishable by law.

"Article 27. Paragraph 7. Section II is suppressed. Section III shall read as follows:

"III. All institutions of public charity, whether private or public, which have for their object the assistance of the needy, scientific research, diffusion of learning, or any other lawful object, may not acquire more real property than is indispensable for such objects, immediately and directly destined for such use; but they may acquire, hold and administer loans and mortgages on real property, and administer loans and mortgages on real property, provided the terms of such loans do not exceed ten years.

"The religious associations known as churches, whatever may be their creed, shall be subject to the same system of property that applies to institutions of charity in so far as regards the buildings destined to public worship, annexes, episcopal residences, seminaries, asylums, orphanages, hospitals, colleges and any other building destined to the service of said religious associations.

"Article 130. The first paragraph shall be changed to read as follows:

"The federal authorities shall have power to exercise in matters related with the various cults, and as regards the public peace, such intervention as by law authorized. All other officials shall act as auxiliaries of the federal authorities.

Paragraph V., which reads, 'The law recognizes no juridical personality in the religious institutions known as churches', shall be changed to read, 'The state and the religious associations known as churches, are mutually independent'.

"The churches are free to organize themselves hierarchically, as they best deem proper; but such organization will produce no other effects before the state other than to give juridical personality to its superiors, in each locality, for the exercise of the rights granted in Section III of Article 27.

"Transitory: The temples destined for public worship, episcopal residences, seminaries, asylums or colleges of religious associations, convents or any other building which, in accordance with Section II, paragraph 7, Article 27 of the constitution became the property of the nation, are hereby returned to the ownership of the respective religious associations.

"Mexico, D. F. September 6, 1926.

"In the name of all the archbishops and bishops of the Mexican Republic: The President of the Episcopal Committee, José Mora, Archbishop of Mexico; Secretary, Pascual Díaz, Bishop of Tabasco".[1]

The three major points which the prelates contended for were: The conservation of the wealth of the Church; the recognition of a juridical personality in the Church; and the continuation of convents and monasteries, as well as the freedom to continue the old educational system. It gave way on such points as that of allowing marriage a civil contract, special tribunals for privileged individuals, religious toleration and secularization of cemeteries. It was as close as the Church could come to a compromise, but it was too close for the government, for whom the chief bones of contention have always been

[1]Diario de los Debates, September 8, 1926. p. 8.

the control of education and the material wealth of the clergy.

The petition was turned over to the proper committee, which the next day brought in its report.

The report of the committee was as follows:

"Having made a careful study (of the memorial) we find that: Article 8 of the constitution concedes the right of petition in political matters only to Mexican citizens, and paragraph 3, Article 37, reads as follows:

'1. Citizenship is lost . . .

'III. By compromising themselves in any way before ministers of any religious creed or before any other person not to observe the present constitution, or the laws arising thereunder'.

"Messrs. Mora and Díaz are precisely in this situation, having declared and boasted publicly, that they do not recognize, nor will they recognize in the future the present constitution, according to the instructions of the Roman pontiff. They have consequently fallen under the section of the article just cited, losing their rights as Mexican citizens. Messrs. Mora and Díaz are not legally capacitated to exercise the right of petition in political matters . . .

"Notwithstanding, the committee has thought it pertinent to study carefully the petition, entering into the subject at length. The petition of Messrs. Mora and Díaz not only contains the reform of certain constitutional principles but it also embodies an attack against the fundamental basis of the liberal republican regime, pretending to re-establish the state of conditions prior to the revolution of Ayutla.

"It is sensible to suppose that constitutional reforms, in order to be acceptable, should respect the fundamental principles upon which the liberal republican regime is based, but we cannot admit the consideration of reforms which undermine the fundamental spirit of our Magna Charta".

The debate which followed was one of the stormiest of the entire session. It was immediately apparent that the Church had a hopeless case, for deputy after deputy

arose to tear to shreds the petition in question, heaping an interminable avalanche of very bad and very excellent oratory on the Church in general and the prelates in particular. It was on this occasion that Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama made his famous oration, in many ways a representative bit of revolutionary ideology. Only one deputy, Hidalgo, attempted to defend the Church, but he had hardly ascended the forum when the howls of the gallery, the cat calls and insults of fish-mongers and the pandemonium created by his own colleagues compelled him to desist. Without giving the clericals a hearing, the vote was taken with an overwhelming defeat of the petition.

From this brief summary of the official documents which reveal the heart of the controversy, we may now turn to a critical analysis of the strategy followed by the Church during the recent months.

It was first of all a grave mistake to have published the statements of February 5, 1926. Such a step could be justified by reasons which have thus far not been revealed, and it gave the Church the role of casting the first stone. It permitted Calles to assume that position of defense which is always so advantageous in matters of this nature. The Church could have lost no more if the government had taken the first step; as it is, it has lost prestige at the very outset of the battle.

The economic boycott has not had the complete effects which were desired. Of course,, although Calles and Obregón may deny it, this measure necessarily continues to have some effect. But the paralyzation of industry has not been brought about; rather it has been revealed that the Church no longer controls production and that it is economically much weaker than it had admitted.

The boycott came at a time when the national industries were needing every assistance that could be given to get on their feet. And in Mexico, where any government depends vitally on economic balance for its existence, a move to hinder or upset such an equilibrium is nothing less than an indirect political blow. The Church made the mistake of insisting that this was a peaceful measure, when no one could possibly believe that.

This represents the inconsistency of the prelates in conducting the policy of the Church. They have adopted neither an attitude of complete intransigence, nor one of submission to the law. The statements of February 5 and 6, 1926, had left an ill savor in government circles which hardly paved the way for the petitions of August and September.

It is a debatable point whether an error was committed in suspending religious services. Strictly speaking, there was nothing else the clergy could do unless they submitted to the full sanction of Article 130, in which case the religious question would have ended then and there. Given the resolution not to abide by the regulation of the decree, that step was logical and necessary.

But it implied a grave danger from another source. Under no circumstances did it behoove the Church to lose its spiritual control of the faithful over a long period of time. If the sacraments were suspended for weeks and even months, even the most zealous Catholics would gradually become accustomed to do without mass, the confessional and communion; and such indifference threatened especially in the ranks of the youth of the Church. To expect that the young Catholics would maintain a sad and shrouded existence as a sign of protest for many months was an error that the clergy did not fail to detect, but which was difficult to avert.

To solve this vital problem, the Church has organized its forces so that the spiritual life of its followers is not beyond its control. On the surface the Church is not ministering to its flock; its ministers are on a spiritual hunger strike. But, below the surface, the opposite is true. Mass is being said in hundreds of private homes throughout the land. It is an open secret, which even the government does not ignore, that priests are baptizing, marrying, and ministering to the dying every day. The writer has been present at the death bed of Catholics who received extreme unction from priests, and attended mass on various occasions, in the capital as well as in other parts of Mexico.

The young people have been organized into divers

kinds of clubs, circles and leagues, having for their purpose the dissemination of propaganda, the support of indigent priests, and even the collection of funds to aid armed uprisings in the north and west.

Of course, many of these surreptitious religious services have been broken up by the police. Women and aged men have been jailed and beaten by government raiders, but these are isolated exceptions. If the government were actually carrying out a campaign of persecution, it is doubtful whether the Church could continue this mode of existence much longer. At any rate, it is a precarious way of maintaining its spiritual virility.

The old charge has been made that the Church is directly responsible for the armed outbreaks of recent months. During the month of February, 1927, these assumed alarming proportions, especially in Jalisco, Michoacán, Chihuahua, and Guanajuato. General Alvarez, chief of staff of the Mexican army, has repeatedly affirmed that the episcopate is fostering these outbreaks, and the episcopate has with as much insistence denied it.

It is true that many of the guerrillas have gathered around the cry of "Viva Cristo Rey" (Long live Christ the King). Many standards and flags have been taken which bear inscriptions of holy texts, pictures of saints and religious mottos. On several occasions the bodies of priests have been identified among the dead after encounters between government troops and rebels, and more than once prisoners have testified that priests have incited them to revolt.

This, however, is not conclusive proof that there is an organized plan of armed opposition by the Church. The episcopate affirms that if priests are taking an active part in the revolts, they do so on their own responsibility and with no co-operation from Mexico City.

No available documents can be secured to prove that the clergy are up in arms, though secretely. But, it is entirely possible that they may have a pre-arranged plan for doing so. The past history of the Church does not give it the benefit of the doubt. In the meantime, its non-committance concerning the men who are in arms

with the Church banner at their head is more than injurious to the Catholic cause.

Most of the prominent prelates of the Mexican church have been summoned to Mexico City, where they are under the surveillance of the secretary of the interior. Their movements are closely watched and very often they are taken into custody and confined in prison while their papers and correspondence are inspected by the police agents. Especially watched is Archbishop Orozco y Jiménez, of Guadalajara, a mediaeval type of bishop-knight who feels as much at home astride a charger brandishing a Springfield as on his archiepiscopal dias benignly waving the mitre.

The churches are open at all times and invariably occupied by worshippers. On one occasion the writer visited five of the principal churches of Mexico City and found none with less than two hundred worshippers. Of course, there was no priest present, but usually a lay woman would direct the service, and the chorus would continue with its customary duties. The statement has been made in American newspapers that these congregations are molested by soldiers and the services are frequently suspended. This is absolutely untrue. During a stay of seven months in the capital, the writer did not see a single instance of this.

At present writing the situation is no less tense than on August 1st, 1926. Many have been lulled into a state of false security, believing that the clergy have crossed their arms and retired into seclusion. Such persons have not taken the trouble to sound the under-current of opinion, and to look for the subtarranean channels into which the Church has diverted its energies and its powerful influence. Both liberals and conservatives recognize that they are in the midst of a life and death struggle which is a recrudescence of the one left pending since 1857-1860.

The Church has perhaps no more determined enemy in Mexico than organized labor. In spite of what the clergy had claimed with respect to its social program, the Mexican laborer cannot remember a time within the last fifty years when the Church made any determined

effort to secure a betterment of social conditions. The industrialization of the country brought about by Díaz left the capitalist in control everywhere; and the evils incident to such exploitation found no opposition from any source. The organization and emancipation which Mexican labor has achieved has been done entirely through its own efforts, and the failure of the Church as the only potent social agency to improve its lot when assistance was so sorely needed, rankles in the memory of organized workers today.

Evidence of open hostility between labor and the Church has not been lacking. In May, 1922, the labor organizations of the federal district staged a huge parade and demonstration. As the paraders were passing through one of the central streets, a group of young men, Knights of Columbus, led by René Capistrán Garza, began to hurl insults and bricks at the laborites. The latter did not respond until one of the Catholics fired a pistol, wounding a child of one of the workers. Immediately ranks were broken and the building was sacked and gutted. Later, a formal challenge was issued by labor leaders to the Knights of Columbus, proposing a public debate on the incident. The challenge was never accepted.

On July 29, 1926, two days before the famous decree on Article 130 went into effect, the Regional Confederation of Mexican Laborers held a monster demonstration in Mexico City as a sign of sympathy for President Calles and his religious policy. It is estimated that 100,000 persons took part in a procession that lasted all morning. The president was given a memorial in which the support and the co-operation of the laboring masses was assured. No less interesting was the telegram of the Workers Federation of Amsterdam, whose secretary, J. W. Brown, wired the support and sympathy of twenty-one million European workers for Calles and Mexican labor.

Shortly after these incidents a series of public debates was held in the Iris Theatre of Mexico City, having for the theme the various aspects of Calles's church policy. From the liberal point of view, these debates were

eminently successful, although it must be pointed out that the audiences were entirely hostile to the Catholic speakers. One of the debates was on "The Church and the Laborer". Morones, secretary of commerce, labor and industry, made a blistering attack on the Church's so-called social program.

It would be false, however, to assert that the present phase of the religious conflict in Mexico is primarily a class struggle. The masses of workers are nominally Catholic at least, and their opposition to the Church is evidenced only in so far as the Church is considered as an obstacle to their program. The main-spring of labor action lies in motives other than that of antagonism to conservative religion. Nevertheless, zealous Catholics of the middle and upper classes never speak the name of labor groups without a feeling of contempt and disgust.

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Before passing to formulate any conclusions on the material that has been studied, a word about the international aspects of the Church conflict in Mexico.

Elsewhere it has been said that, strictly speaking, the matter is entirely a domestic one for the southern republic, and is so regarded by its government. But the great interests that are involved in the struggle have attracted widespread attention beyond the borders, projecting the controversy into the international realm.

The attitude that American Protestants have assumed in the situation is one of tepid interest. To most intelligent non-Catholics the Mexican situation is merely one more chapter in the steady battle that the Roman Catholic Church has had to fight through long ages. There is no generalized sentiment in the United States that Protestant sects should use the present turmoil to their advantage, proselyting while the Catholic hierarchy has its hands full elsewhere. And it is perhaps just as well that it should be so. Official Protestant statements have been made, however, which tend to misrepresent the attitude of American Protestants and which embitter Mexican Catholics. Such, for example, was the resolution of the California Presbyterian Synod, held in July,

1926, at Hollywood, California. The Rev. McLennon of that city proposed the resolution expressing the sympathy of that assembly for President Calles and full accord with his policy toward the Church. It is extremely doubtful whether the reverend who proposed the resolution had based his opinions on anything but the headlines of the morning's papers, which, singularly enough, carried accounts of jailings of women and young girls, and physical assaults in many cases.

Fortunately, the bulk of American Protestants are disposed to wait for more complete information and for a better historical knowledge of the controversy before they assume any aggressive attitude one way or another.

The Catholic sentiment in the United States is somewhat different. The bellicose attitude of the Knights of Columbus is explained primarily by the fact that the Catholic Church is waging a losing fight in Mexico, and if the world were still in the good old days when international boundaries were not obstacles to the legions of the Vatican, Mexico today might be the scene of a modern Albigensian crusade.

In a very interesting letter circulated by John A. Reagan on September 16, 1926, it was stated that the Knights were determined "to pursue relentlessly a campaign of eradication of the evils that have brought about the intolerable conditions" in Mexico; "There, holy men and women are insulted, reviled and exiled; there, the Bolshevist government seeks to destroy the Church; there membership in the Knights of Columbus means dismissal from gainful occupation; this under a constitution the provisions of which were never submitted to or adopted by the free people of Mexico." "And", the letter closes with the melodramatic thriller, "Señor Bolshevist, the K. of C. have accepted your challenge and are coming 1,000,000 dollars strong. And they are standing by 800,000 strong until you and your so-called Constitution are dead". A few days before, Supreme Commander Flaherty had expounded such sentiments as "the present situation is the russianizing of Mexico; that to the Mexican government marriage is a myth, the family

a degradation. Calles and Obregón are enthusiastic supporters of Bolshevist ideas". "The arms embargo should be lifted". "Mr. Coolidge should demand the same consideration and respect for American citizens in Mexico as Mexican citizens receive in the United States", and other choice bits of profound philosophical meditations. The whole thing is capped by an appeal for a $1,000,000 campaign to fight the policy of the Mexican government.

How this money is to be used is not clear. Part of it is for an educational campaign in the United States, but the bulk of it is for "Mexican relief". The only relief that this could refer to would be the supplying of funds and arms to the rebel nucleii that are now fighting for "Religión y Fueros" in the mountainous regions of the country.

The statements of the Knights of Columbus leaders are so superficial that they do not merit an answer. Their very superficiality, indeed, precipitates them into many errors which they are spreading about as counterfeit truth. For example, it is untrue to say that membership in the Knights of Columbus in Mexico means dismissal from gainful occupation. The writer met and talked to a dozen or so officials in the government service who were members of that order. What Mr. Reagan meant was that membership in the order and participation in seditious activities means immediate dismissal. It is interesting to conjecture in what sense the phrase "until you and your so-called Constitution are dead" is to be understood.

Representative Boylan of the United States congress and the Hon. Alfred M. Talley have contributed their bit to muddle the waters still more. The former introduced a resolution demanding an investigation of the situation in Mexico, and the latter has said that "back of all this religious persecution . . . lies the Soviet idea that seeks to break down and destroy the conservative force of the Church". So far as Mexico is concerned, the causes that lie behind the church struggle go back to a time when

Moscow was an ill-smelling village and the muscovite tyrants hardly knew what lay beyond the Baltic Sea.

The status of non-Catholic churches and missions in Mexico is precisely that of Catholic churches. They are compelled to abide by the requirements of Article 130, and their buildings and schools are the property of the nation. It is undoubtedly true that the present government has not enforced these precepts with great stringency, but the Protestant groups would do well to subject themselves to the sanction of the law at all times. Most Protestant groups have taken steps to comply with the law.

President Calles is determined to keep the religious question out of international relations. When President Leguía of Perú offered his good offices to arbitrate the question and to lift the existing interdict, Calles answered in blunt terms that he considered the issue a purely national one and would therefore not welcome the interference of outside influences.

Unfortunately, there has been much wilful misrepresentation in the American press by interested groups. The most notorious offender is "The Pilot," a Catholic organ published in Boston, Mass. On one occasion "The Pilot" published an article in which it was said that the Mexican press was being gagged by Calles. As supporting proof, the statement was made that "El Universal" and "Excelsior," two "moderately liberal" papers of Mexico City, and the most important ones in the country, had been put under government censorship. To any one who knows the policies of the two newspapers in question, the assertion that they are "moderately liberal" is wide of the mark. Their editorials are continuously declaring more or less boastfully, the most conservative policies.

Perhaps the most complete statement of the Catholic case printed in English can be found in the pastoral letter of the American archbishops, published in "The Pilot" of December 18, 1926. It contains many errors of fact and some of reasoning; but it is an important

document on the subject, containing as it does the complete defense of the Catholic Church.

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This, then, is the present situation in the Mexican religious question. We have found that the reform motive played an insignificant part in the revolt initiated by Madero in 1911. His successor, Huerta, was outspokenly a reactionary, and he enjoyed the open support of the clergy during his brief dictatorship. Carranza's policy towards the Church was one of quiet but effective reform, which did not have official expression until 1915 and later in the Constitution of 1917. What that document provides by way of religious reform, we have seen. From 1917 to 1926 the articles of the Constitution remained unenforced; but in February of the latter year the clergy precipitated the present storm by publishing the statements of protest and opposition already discussed. The government followed with the regulatory law of Article 130 which went into effect on August 1, 1926. Since that time the clergy has petitioned for constitutional reform to both the president and the congress, but has failed in both instances. As a form of protest the religious services were suspended and the economic boycott was effected, both steps contributing materially to the tension of the crisis. Since August 1st there have been many sporadic uprisings of rebel groups who proclaim the rights of the Church as their motto, but whether the clergy is actively directing these groups is not definitelly established as yet.

The Church is doing its best to maintain its organization intact by clandestine services, sacred organizations of young people, and a steady stream of propaganda through all possible media. It has learned one lesson from history—to wait. And waiting it is.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

Has the Church meddled in politics? The strength of the Church. Its past monopoly on education and other forms of social control—its great wealth—excesses of its enemies—control of the press. The chief weaknesses of the Church in Mexico; confusion between religion and clericalism—schismatic groups—lack of reform from within—although 90 per cent of Mexico's population is Catholic, there exists no uniform concept or practice of the true Catholic religion in the country—prevalence of superstitious practices among the Indian tribes. Religious reform is necessary for the progress of the country. Are the means justified? The immediate effects of the religious controversy and some probable remote results.

It was indicated at the outset that some conclusions might be formulated at the end of this study, such conclusions to be based on five points, namely,

1. Has the Church intervened in the political activities of the country?
2. What is the strength of the Church and what are its weaknesses?
3. Is reform necessary?
4. Are the means justified? And, finally,
5. What are the likely consequences of the present situation?

With respect to the first point, whether the Church has meddled in politics, the reader is referred to the material which has been presented in the earlier portions of this study. When the American archbishops ask "When and where has the Church mixed in politics," history must answer briefly and pointedly: all during the Spanish domination; in 1808; in 1821, when its brains framed the plan of Iguala; in 1833, when it overthrew Gómez Frías; in 1835 and 1852, when it made Santa-Anna dictator; in 1847, when it incited the revolt of the "Polkos"; in 1857, when it directed the coup of Tacubaya; all during the War of Reform, when its coffers, its silver plate and its gold were at the disposal of the conservative generals; in 1913, when it supported Gamboa for the presidency, openly attacked Madero, and threw

its support to Huerta; and since 1917, when it has used all the means at its command to bring about the defeat of the Constitution of that year.

The Church is not altogether to blame. It simply inherited a tradition, established during three hundred years of Spanish rule, during which not only was it licit for the Church to operate as a political unit, but when sometimes it was synonymous with the civil power. The mistakes that it made began in 1821, when it tried to continue that close interlacing of civil and ecclesiastical matters in a theoretical republican, democratic form of government. The friends as well as the enemies of the Church must once and for all recognize the vital necessity of separating the two entities, and that such separation is not effected by a simple decree of law. It is a separation that must take place in all the forms of social control where Church and State come in contact—in education, in politics, in charity and care of dependents, in the formulation of public opinion.

No liberal with any amount of intelligence will say that the Church is today down and definitely out. The Church is still strong, and it continues to live although its temples are draped with mourning cloth and its ministers are in seclusion. First, the Church is, politically speaking, a virile force because of the monopoly it exercised for so long on public education. Scores of generations have grown up under the strict discipline of the Church, which permits no strange idea to filter into the the minds of youth. It has imparted the tenacity and intolerance of its dogma to millions and millions of souls, and today those masses are sincerely and unconditionally subjected to the clergy.

In 1850, Lucas Alamán wrote, "Great was the influence of the clergy, and it was due mainly to three factors: the respect for religion, the memory of valuable services rendered, and its vast wealth". Today, the last mentioned is a minor element. The Church no longer legally controlls one-third of the national wealth as it did in the late 18th century; it no longer holds the key to national industry and commerce, as it did in 1806. But it still

holds its grip on the imagination, the emotions and the will of millions of followers.

Mexican society today is indellibly marked with the influence of Catholic policy which prevailed unchallenged for so many generations. The speech, the customs, the habits, the ideas, the usages, of the Mexican people are impregnated with the influence of the Church. Undeniably, no one factor has had such an influence on the social development of the people as has the Church. From the taxi-driver who kisses the peso that he receives as his hire, crosses himself and invokes the name of his patron saint, the humble fruit-vendor who mumbles a prayer over his pile of oranges to insure sales during the day, to the director of huge business enterprises who has a palm leaf that was blessed by the bishop last Easter Day placed over his desk, the long years of efforts of the Church are revealed.

The control of public opinion continues to be exercised by the old means—the confessional. It is admitted everywhere that the confessional is a decided failure so far as it concerns Catholic men; but it is a very effective means to control the opinion of the feminine sex. No one will ever be able to estimate the uttermost consequences of the confessional in Mexican social life, where in the family not even the husband is entitled to share the innermost thoughts of his wife as is the priest; where the child turns for counsel and advice to a friar rather than to the mother.

Of course, Catholics have exaggerated these things to a large degree. One Jesuit writer said, "We do not hesitate one instant to affirm that anything majestic and great which man has created in Spanish America, all, all is owed to the religious spirit, and that in *everything*, the Church has had its hand, either to initiate or to perfect".[1] The American pastoral letter alluded to above, contains this, "Show me one good thing in Mexico that I (the Church) did not give you. Show me one genius for whom I was not responsible. Show be one step towards the light I did not help you to make. Take out of your

[1]Los Intereses Católicos en América—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 1 p. 545.

country all that I put into it, and see what remains. You cannot erase the mark I made on you". A good proud boast, justified in more ways than one. But, of course, the fly in the ointment is that there is a sharp difference of opinion as to what are these "steps towards the light", these geniuses, these good things, of which the American prelates speak.

If these things are so, then why does not the Church mobilize the millions of faithful in Mexico, overthrow the present government, and set up a conservative regime?. In the answer to this very obvious interrogation lies the exposition of the weakness of the Mexican Church.

The American archiespicopal letter says, "Even Catholics have asked why the Church in Mexico does not use its undoubted power to bring this persecution to a speedy end, since it is admitted that the overwhelming majority of the Mexican people are in its fold". The answer given is that the Church, believing that more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of, prefers to use that weapon and not material force.

Wuth due respect for the laudable choice made by the Church, the reasons must be pointed out why it is severely handicapped in using force, even if it chose to.

Mexico has a population of which more or less 90 per cent is Catholic. But it is far from being a Catholicism that unites and solidifies all its members into one conscious group. From the earliest days Catholicism has had an unhealthy mixture of idolatry, heathenism, and pantheism which the natives brought to it from their ancestral religion. Here is what Zavala says about the earliest converts to the faith: "The natives found the images of the churches much more pleasing and perfect than their own monstrous idols, and it was not a difficult thing to transfer to the saints the homage and ceremonies once paid to the ancestral gods".[1] Lucas Alamán, describing religious ceremonies in the early 19th century, says, "The people, little understanding the basis of true religion, conceived it as being principally the pomp of wor-

[1]Ensayo Histórico—Zalvala. Vol. 1 p. xxx.

ship. The feasts which should have been spiritual events, were converted into great vanity, where there was much dancing, bull-fights, cock-fights, card games, gambling, fire-works, and many other amusements''.[1] This seemed a natural fruit of the native character, for one Catholic historian complains of the same situation in South America. ''I have seen,'' he says, ''in Espiritu Santo, in Río Janeiro, in Santos and other important cities, nothing but a mixture of religion and superstitution, which grieves any person who understands the real dignity of Catholic practices''.[2]

This mixture of native tradition with imported beliefs has a disastrous effect on Catholic unity, because each locality or each tribe adds those beliefs which are peculiar to it. Outside of the modern cities, it is safe to say that there is no one predominant form of Catholicism.

Ramón Prida in a recent book on Mexico, consigns the following analysis: ''The native of today, has only two motives which will drive him to action: his plot of ground and his woman. Being of a primitive race, he should have another—his religion; but the native who has not been totally civilized carries within his conscience a continual struggle between the religion of his ancestors, still latent in his being, and the Catholic religion, imposed by force upon him, and which is his first cause for hating the Spaniard. This makes the zeal and fanaticism of the Indian a purely local matter; so local is it that he never fights for his religion, but he is willing to tear himself to pieces and go to any extreme for the saint of the town church''.[3]

In effect, there are numerous examples all over the republic of neighboring villages which have maintained traditional feuds over the alleged superiority and merits of their respective local saints. Such ''Catholics'' could never be incited to rise to a man to fight for the right of investiture, the infallibility of the Pope or the Apostolic succession.

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[1]Gran Década Nacional—Galindo. Vol. 1 p. 16.
[2]Los Intereses Católicos—Eyzaguirre. Vol. 1 p. 76.
[3]De la Dictadura a la Anarquía—Prida. p. 344.

This disintegration is further accentuated by the fact that the majority of the faithful in the republic are illiterates. The only effective means of propagandizing is the priest, a slow method at best. In the United States it is perfectly easy for the Knights of Columbus to put over a one million dollar drive in a week's time, with telegraph, telephone, newspapers, radio and books at hand. But in Mexico any concerted action is blocked by the illiteracy of the people and the dominant part which rumor and gossip play in the formulation of public opinion.

To these fundamental weaknesses of the Church organization must be added one more — the schismatic group which is seeking to make hay while the sun shines. That body has broken off from the mother church and has called itself the Orthodox Mexican Catholic Church. Its primate is the Rev. Dr. Don Posé Joaquín Pérez. As a matter of fact, this schismatic group is a practically minus quantity in the religious conflict. It now has only one church in Mexico City, having lost the other one not long ago. Calles pays no attention to it, the regular Catholics despise it and the Protestants watch it with mild amusement. On the whole, it represents a tardy move to get on the band wagon, and its present anaemic existence will fast taper to an end.

This will help to explain why the Church in Mexico does not direct an all-engulfing movement of restoration at the head of its 14,500,000 faithful.

Furthermore, until there is a reform within the Church itself, the so-called reforms imposed by outsiders will only be continuous limitations of its power and not changes in the spirit of its ideals.

Comes now the question as to whether reform is necessary. It is obvious that the gist of the whole controversy rests in this point. Those who believe that it is necessary are the liberals, who are now in power; those who dissent are, of course, the clerical-conversatives.

The history of the Church itself, the circumstances of today, the general trend of world life and thought, the role which Mexico is called upon to play in the affairs

of this hemisphere, and the general history of Church-State conflicts since the middle ages, all point to the necessity of establishing a reform on a precise and lasting basis. Public education and intellectual emancipation are not compatible with clerical control of the school systems. Absolute toleration of all creeds is an indisputable principle. The control by any one group, especially if it be a hierarchial organization, of the industry, the commerce and the economic life of the nation is a danger and a menace. The political influence of the Church can under no circumstances be permitted to continue. Special privileges and rights for the clergy is an idea repugnant to the democratic republican principles of government. And the meddling of pontifical authority in national affairs should be kept strictly within its proper spiritual limits, else not permitted at all. The clash of principles has always remained unchanged; it is only the scene that has shifted. Mexico is today the theatre of a drama that once played at Rome, Canossa, Anagni, Avignon, Worms and Windsor.

To those who are convinced that reform is necessary the problem becomes one of the means to obtain it. In Mexico, the principles of the reform have been expressed in the Constitution of 1917, supplemented by the regulatory laws of Article 130. In the enforcement of that law many, both lay and ecclesiastical persons have been imprisoned. There is not, however, a plan of cruel persecution, as many have been led to believe; and Calles will do well to realize that any excesses unjustified by the law will be punished by a loss of sympathy abroad. The deportations of Pascual Díaz, Jorge Caruana, and many others simply respond to the decision of exiling the leaders who remain completely intransigent with the government.

As for compromise, any sensible man will avert it to avoid his own ruin. Three men in Mexican history have tried it: Comonfort, Maximilian and Díaz. The first two paid dearly for it, and the third only succeeded in passing on to his successors the same problem, aggravated by his

own hyprocricy and the false sense of security which duped all but the most alert.

No forecast of the future is safe in respect to Mexican politics. And, in dealing with the religious problem, to attempt a prophesy would be foolhardy, where motives and principles present such a chaos of counter currents. The religious issue is inextricably allied to every other problem that faces Mexico today: the economic, the political, the social, the agrarian, the financial, the industrial, the educational and the international. But, unless a veritable catastrophe overtakes the liberal group, Mexico will not return to the days of Santa-Anna. Whatever points the Church may gain in the future, it will not go back to the times when it alone was the supreme power in the social and political life of the nation.

One tremendous lesson the clergy has learned from the past. No social power which does not respect the attributes and domain of another can expect to perpetuate the invulnerability of its own. Invasions into the jurisdiction of others invariably bring reprisals and a diminution of prestige in the public mind.

To those who would judge the men and the acts that compose the long history of the religious struggle in Mexico, a fair plea is made. Any such judgment must be preceded by an understanding of the great factors that shaped the character of the people and that have given it its greatest problems. The fusion of two distinct races brought forth a bewildering heterogeneity which baffles the best ethnologists. This in time gave rise to a caste and class system which has submerged millions into perpetual misery, poverty, ignorance and degradation, while it elevated a few thousands to the stagnant heights of sensuality, luxury, indolence and immorality; to a regime under which the pariah constantly begged a foot of land from the satrap who had a million acres lying fallow.

Few have been the men with the vision and the unselfishness sufficient to give the people the norms for their salvation. And of these norms the outstanding one is the reform, of which someone has said, "The reform is the only definite and complete achievement that we have

gained during our independence". How truly incomplete that one is can be seen by the observing student. And not until the real Mexico is understood by the foreigner, not unfil he has probed the depths of her misery and the pulsations of her vague but virile ideals, can he justly condemn the struggle she is making to balance her social life in the way best fitted to her past, her character and her destiny.

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